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Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-038 *27 February 1995*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Progress Reported in Israeli-Syrian Negotiations

TA2602183195 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli-Syrian negotiations have resumed in Washington in recent days. Political sources told 'Imanu'el Rosen, our political correspondent, that progress has been achieved in several spheres, including security, and that the drafting of the agreed-upon clauses was undertaken for the first time.

Despite the progress, the direct talks between the ambassadors have not resumed. The sides are holding the current talks through meetings with Dennis Ross, the U.S. secretary of state's assistant.

Rabinovich on Chance of Direct Talks

TA2702062395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington expects the direct talks between Israel and Syria to resume in the wake of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the Middle East next week.

Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador in Washington, said that Syria wants to return to the negotiating table but is having a hard time resuming the talks because it must find a justification for having halted them two months ago. He added that there is a chance that the talks will resume after Secretary Christopher's visit to the region, but that the format of the talks and the level of the participants will be determined in additional talks. Ambassador Rabinovich was speaking to our Washington correspondent Arye Golan.

Israel's Savir, PA's Quray', U.S. Consul Meet

TA2602165595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources in the Palestinian Authority [PA] told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that Uri Savir, director general of the Foreign Ministry, met with Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], the PA official in charge of the economic portfolio, and U.S. Consul Edward Abington in Jerusalem today. The three discussed various ideas for solving the unemployment problems faced by Palestinian workers, as well as the establishment of industrial zones in the territories.

Jordanian Official: 'No New Date' for Meeting on Refugees

JN2502095495 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Feb 95 p 3

[Article by staff reporter]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—An Arab-Israeli meeting scheduled to be held in Amman on Sunday [26 February] on the repatriation of displaced Palestinians has been postponed, and no new date has been set, a senior official said Friday.

'Asim Ghawshah, director of the Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry, added, however, that he was not aware of the precise reason for the postponement.

"I was informed by the Foreign Minister ('Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti) last week that the meeting was postponed under a decision taken in the (Feb. 12) Washington meeting," Mr. Ghawshah told the JORDAN TIMES.

"No new date has been set as of today (Friday)."

The Washington meeting, which grouped the foreign ministers of Jordan, Egypt and Israel and a senior representative of the Palestine National Authority (PNA), was convened with a view to seeking means to address the troubled Middle East peace process, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian track of negotiations.

According to local columnists and analysts, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres wanted the meeting on the displaced persons deferred. The Israeli stand, according to the analysts and columnists, came when Mr. Peres say that Jordan, Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-led PNA had coordinated their positions ahead of the meeting.

Such an Arab coordination would have meant heavy pressure on Israel to fully adhere to the commitment on the displaced Palestinians it undertook in the Declaration of Principles (DOP) it signed with the PLO in September 1993.

Jordan, Egypt and the PLO held a meeting in early February in Cairo to coordinate their stands.

They drew up a set of priorities and classifications of the displaced persons and agreed to present a joint approach to the Israelis during the Amman meeting.

"Israel did not appear to have prepared itself for such an eventuality where the three Arab parties would have a joint stand," said a seasoned observer.

"Obviously, it was hoping that Israel and the PLO would be on one side of the table with Jordan and Egypt on the other rather than facing all the three Arab parties across the table."

Under the DOP, the main issue on the table for the meeting on the displaced persons would be the modalities and mechanisms for the repatriation of these people rather than any debate on the very essence of repatriation or the right of the displaced persons to return home.

"There is no question of any fresh negotiations on the right of the displaced persons to return home," said a Jordanian official. "Israel has undertaken to respect the

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rights of the displaced persons to return to their homeland, and the only issue that will be discussed at the proposed meeting will be how to organise their return."

Mr. Ghawshah told the JORDAN TIMES that "no new date has been set for the meeting" but that the Jordanian side had prepared itself to present the Kingdom's perceptions of the repatriation of the displaced at anytime.

The Jordanian priority, according to officials, is to formulate a "clear mechanism" that would ensure the "orderly return" of the displaced persons starting with the Palestinians stranded in Jordan after their Israeli-issued exit and entry permits expired in the years after 1967, "family reunifications," and the return of those who were actually displaced in the 1967 war.

The officials say that while the sequence of the return of the three categories should be in that order, they do not see any reason that they could not take place simultaneously under a predetermined time-table.

Inter-Arab Affairs

U.S. Said To Oppose Independent Palestinian State

NC2602110395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1033 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] 26 Feb (MENA)—Ambassador Sa'id Kamal, Arab League assistant secretary general for Palestinian Affairs, has announced that he obtained a document from the previous U.S. Administration affirming that consecutive U.S. Administrations have rejected the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

In a statement to the newspaper AL-WAFD published today, Kamal remarked that the Oslo agreement and the Madrid conference have neglected this vitally important issue.

Sa'id Kamal noted that the United States acknowledges that the Palestinians have political rights but nothing more and this recognition involves giving the Palestinians the option to establish some form of a confederation with Jordan.

He added that the U.S. Administration interprets Palestinian self-determination as denoting a confederate option [with Jordan] but not a confederate union that would denote the existence of two separate states.

Palestinian Affairs

PA Ministers Discuss 'Arafat's Tour; Sha'th Comments

JN2502164895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] The council of ministers of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA; Palestinian Authority, PA] met under President Yasir 'Arafat in Gaza today. The council approved the 'Id al-Fitr holiday from 1 to 5 March and approved financial assistance to the families of the detainees and the needy on 'Id al-Fitr. The council sanctioned the attendance of the quadrilateral foreign ministers meeting on the return of the refugees scheduled on 6 March. The council also approved the establishment of the new investment company in the form of a development bank with a capital of $250 million. The council empowered 'Umar al-'Aqqad to establish a major public company for communications in Palestine.

In its session today, the council discussed the peace march, the obstacles facing it, and the efforts being exerted for progress toward the interim phase—legislative elections and redeployment. The ministers discussed the results of 'Arafat's tour of Paris, Cairo, Tunis, and Jeddah and the outcome of his meetings.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, described 'Arafat's meetings as important and useful and said that the president's visit to Saudi Arabia was an all-round success. Saudi Arabia pledged to support the PNA's political position to activate the peace process and implement the Declaration of Principles. Saudi King Fahd pledged ever growing economic support for the PNA projects.

Sha'th noted that 'Arafat returned with a very positive impression. He expressed the hope that the negotiations will move fast because the paralysis in the peace process harms the Palestinian people's interest and does not benefit anyone. He added that if the peace process remains deadlocked, it might be necessary to develop the negotiating process and move on to issues that constitute obstacles to current negotiations, especially those related to settlement activity, Jerusalem, security, and borders. He noted that there is a growing interest in this issue demonstrated by the United States, Russia, Europe, and all Arab sides, and expressed the hope that Israel's interest will focus on the peace process.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will visit the region in early March. British Prime Minister John Major will pay a visit to the region in mid-March.

For his part, Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government, has warned of a collapse in the peace process if Israel does not adhere to implementing the peace agreement. He added: We do not know what Israel intends to do besides stall.

'Urayqat: Gaza-Jericho 'on the Way to Collapse'

TA2502164695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sa'ib 'Urayqat of the Palestinian Authority has told Israel Radio he believes the Gaza-Jericho accord is on the way to collapse.

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Nabil Sha'th told Israel Radio after the weekly session of the Palestinian Authority that, in view of the present deadlock, it might be preferable to go on to negotiations on the final settlement.

Yasir 'Arafat reported that his recent visit to Saudi Arabia was successful and that Riyadh had promised economic aid.

Quray' Opposes Permanent Settlement Talks 'at This Stage'

TA2602061995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], one of the architects of the Oslo Agreement, has come out against Israel-PLO talks, at this stage, on the permanent settlement. He said the sides should concentrate on implementing agreements already reached. Yesterday, Nabil Sha'th proposed that negotiations begin on the permanent settlement in order to break the current deadlock in the peace process.

Welcomes Proposal on Increasing Gaza Autonomy

TA2602153995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], who is in charge of economic affairs in the Palestinian Authority, has welcomed Minister Shulamit Aloni's proposal to increase the size of the autonomous area in the Gaza Strip. Abu-'Ala' said this is a practical proposal, but noted that it must not come at the expense of Israel's commitment to implement the second stage of the Oslo agreement in the West Bank. Nevertheless, in an interview to Qol Yisra'el in Arabic, Abu-'Ala' rejected the possibility of the Palestinians ceding land in exchange for land received under Aloni's proposal.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Abu-'Ala also welcomed Minister Yosi Sarid's proposal that Israel pay the Palestinians $1 billion shekels a year not to work in Israel. Abu-'Ala' said the Palestinians would be able to invest the funds proposed by Minister Sarid in creating employment inside the territories and alleviating unemployment.

Al-Najjab Sees No Alternative to Negotiations

JN2602155195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sulayman al-Najjab, PLO Executive Committee member and member of the Palestinian People's Party Political Bureau, has stressed that there is no alternative to the process of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations to realize the Palestinian people's rights.

Interviewed by phone by the Voice of Palestine correspondent in Ramallah about the position of the Palestinian People's Party on the Palestinian group that was established recently in the West Bank, al-Najjab said: A crucial point of difference concerning the negotiations still separates our position from that of the forces that make up that group.

The Palestinian official added that the Palestinian People's Party still believes that negotiations are the current front of the conflict to implement UN Security Council Resolution 242 with all its provisions and parts. He said this is an important front and no Palestinian party can bypass it or propose any convincing alternative to it.

Al-Tibi: Sarid Shekels-for-Labor Plan Worth Consideration

TA2602130295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Feb 95 p A5

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Gay Bekhor]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The Palestinian Authority [PA], headed by Yasir 'Arafat, will give serious consideration to an Israeli proposal to exchange Palestinian labor in Israel for an annual payment of one billion shekels," 'Arafat adviser Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi told HA'ARETZ yesterday.

"Minister Yosi Sarid's plan, which refers to converting Palestinian labor in Israel into an annual payment of one billion shekels, is worth taking seriously, but the Israeli Government has not yet officially presented it to the Palestinians," Dr. al-Tibi said. He disclosed that senior PLO officials are showing great interest in the plan. Al-Tibi added that aside from giving one billion shekels annually, the Israeli Government will have to commit itself to opening the PA's borders with Jordan and Egypt to free trade for the entire period of the interim arrangement and not only for one year.

The one billion shekels is considered equal to the proceeds of Palestinian labor in Israel in a single year. The Palestinians will be prepared to receive the money directly and invest it in creating jobs within the territories in order to alleviate unemployment. Observers believe that if the plan is implemented, it could strengthen Israel's separation plan and reduce the number of terrorist attacks.

Cabinet Forms National Dialogue Committee Under 'Arafat

JN2602072195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In its weekly session yesterday, the Council of Ministers of the National Authority decided to form a national dialogue committee chaired by President 'Arafat to enhance the bases of national unity and have all the national parties assume their responsibilities in this respect.

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Radio Reports Israeli Decision To Maintain Closure

JN2702080695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Government has decided to maintain the security cordon on the Palestinian territories. The decision was made during yesterday's weekly meeting of the Rabin government. Rabin said that Israel should end reliance on Palestinian workers.

Demonstration Planned for 1 Mar

JN2602161795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A mass demonstration will be organized on Wednesday [1 March] to protest the continuing Israeli military siege imposed on the Palestinian territory and the closure of Jerusalem.

The demonstration is being organized by the Alternative Information Center, the Land and Water Association, the No-Violence Center, the Palestinian Human Rights Information Center, and the Panorama Center.

It has been decided that the demonstration will take place at the two main checkpoints leading to occupied Jerusalem, in Bethlehem in the South and al-Ram in the North.

PA Permits Reopening of AL-ISTIQLAL Offices

TA2602093395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] has permitted the reopening of Al-Abrar press offices, which were closed down two weeks ago within the framework of steps against the Islamic Jihad. This office publishes the Islamic Jihad organ AL-ISTIQLAL.

Yasir 'Arafat has ordered the closure of a newspaper which is published in the Gaza Strip by one of his close associates after Jordan complained that the paper had published articles attacking King Husayn. The newspaper's editor Samih Samarah, is also the director of the Voice of Palestine in the Gaza Strip. Local sources believe that the paper's closure is only temporary and designed to mollify Jordan.

'Arafat Orders Closure of AL-RASID Bulletin

JN2602113595 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Feb 95 p 21

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—'Umar al-Khatib, representative of the Palestinian National Authority and charge d'affaires of the State of Palestine Embassy in Amman, has stated that President Yasir 'Arafat ordered the closure of AL-RASID [the monitor] bulletin, published in Gaza. He also ordered that the bulletin's supervisor be referred for investigation for an article published by the bulletin recently which harms the Jordanian-Palestinian fraternal relations.

Al-Khatib said that President 'Arafat stressed that relations between Jordan and Palestine are sacred and no one must be allowed to infringe on or harm them. His excellency also stressed that he is committed to what he and King Husayn have agreed upon in their recent meeting in Amman.

Leader Says Hamas, Islamic Jihad Members of New Group

JN2502183395 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Bassam al-Shak'ah, founder of the Palestinian Grouping [al-Tajammu' al-Filastini], a new group opposed to the Oslo agreement, announced today that the Palestinian Resistance Movement, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad Movement, are members of the grouping. In an interview with the newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT today, al-Shak'ah said the grouping also includes the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and several independents.

Al-Shak'ah also said that Yasir 'Arafat, president of the Palestinian National Authority, after arriving in Gaza, contacted and threatened him because of his active opposition to the Oslo agreement.

Hamas Spokesman Criticizes 'Arafat Policy

NC2502204295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Telephone interview with Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah by al-Khafaji; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Khafaji] The Zionist enemy banned Palestinian youths from participating in the Friday prayers in the al-Aqsa Mosque [in Jerusalem] and his occupation forces surrounded and clashed with the worshipers to prevent them from commemorating the international Jerusalem day. Can you tell us what happened there?

[Ghawshah] Yesterday marked the last Friday of the month of Ramadan, which also coincided with the international Jerusalem Day. A large number of worshipers, estimated at about 200,000 people, attended the prayers but a huge number of Zionist policemen prevented many youths from going to the al-Aqsa Mosque on the last Friday of Ramadan.

The Zionist enemy's act reminds us of what he did for the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron before he captured more than two-thirds of the mosque. There are reports now that the Zionist enemy wants to discuss sovereignty over the al-Aqsa Mosque between him and the so-called Palestinian Authority [PA] so that the Jews will have a presence in the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the

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Rock. This confirms the enormous Zionist plan that targets the Islamic land of Palestine, including its people, history, and holy sites.

Unless the Muslims worldwide stand unified and demand the liberation of Palestine and Jerusalem and support the Jerusalem Day called by the late Khomeyni and proclaimed in several countries in the Islamic world [sentence incomplete as heard]

We believe that Jerusalem is the issue of the future and Muslims must rally around it and work toward liberating it. When Jerusalem is liberated, the Islamic world will indeed enjoy quiet and stability.

[Al-Khafaji] In light of the Oslo Accord's deadlock, what is the method you see suitable to consolidate cooperation and cohesion between all factions of the Palestinian people and employ all their energies and creations in the trench of confrontation with the enemy?

[Ghawshah] We previously warned that the Oslo Accord bears the seeds of its destruction in its own provisions and we focused on this point more than a year and half ago. Some people thought that this was mere speculation. Now that this accord has been presented for implementation, all its shortcomings have been exposed, and the PA itself acknowledged that the accord has reached a deadlock, disputes have reached the core of the PA and neither 'Arafat nor those around him are able to move forward or back down.

Therefore, we in the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] movement addressed a call to 'Arafat and the PA that if they have reached this conviction, they must return the trust to the Palestinian people and step aside, which is not a drawback for everyone who respects himself when he errs. We asked that the decision be left for the Palestinian people to choose a genuine leadership both in and outside [the occupied territories]. This genuine leadership should express its decisive and distinct view on all issues concerning the Palestinian people.

[Al-Khafaji] What are the effects of the emerging new Palestinian front opposing 'Arafat's policy and the Oslo Accord, proclaimed by Mr. Bassam al-Shak'ah [former mayor of Nabulus Town on the West Bank] on the developments in the occupied territories?

[Ghawshah] The new independent grouping proclaimed by al-Shak'ah is part of the now growing opposition forces in and outside the territories against the Oslo and Madrid conspiracy and it works toward unifying the Palestinian people to confront the Zionist occupation and settlement. We wish every progress for this grouping, bearing in mind that the Hamas movement is an inseparable part of the Palestinian forces alliance or what was called before the 10 factions. We believe that there are great common denominators between all national, pan-Arab, and Islamic forces around which these forces can rally, most importantly the confrontation of the Zionist racism and occupation, which must be fought in the long term. Sacrifices must be offered that will, God willing, lead to a clear victory.

PFLP's Habash Rejects 'Arafat, Oslo Agreement

JN2402191595 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1758 GMT 24 Feb 95

[Interview with PFLP Secretary General Dr. George Habash by Salim Badawi; place and date not given; from the "Event" program; monitored in progress—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ...[Habash] From the start we, of course, said that this [Oslo] Agreement cannot provide the solution to the Palestine question. This is because it has left the basic issues unresolved, issues such as Jerusalem, the settlements, and self-determination. All the basic issues remained unresolved. We, therefore, said this cannot provide a solution to the Palestine question. In my view, even if this agreement was reformulated or amended, it cannot provide a solution to the Palestine question. This is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's [PFLP] view on the Oslo Agreement.

[Badawi] So, you still wager on the failure of Oslo Agreement and the Madrid settlement. But what alternative do you feel there is after all the progress that has been achieved on more than one track of Arab-Israeli negotiations?

[Habash] We, in fact, have said that the solution can only be based on the basis of restoring balance. What happened, at the time when the official Arab situation was deteriorating, cannot be a solution to the Palestine question. We, therefore, said we must return to the intifadah and rely on the international solution.

[Badawi] In this context, how do you view the decision of President Yasir 'Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee to call for an Arab meeting to discuss the consequences of the collapse of the peace process?

[Habash] 'Arafat disregards the Arabs and does not consult them except in times of crisis. I think this is not a solution to the problem. The same goes for the Palestinian issue. You know that 'Arafat and Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] resolved the Palestine question on their own. This is a big problem. Everybody should know—Clinton, America, Europe, and everybody else—should know that without a solution to the Palestine question based on a state and a return, a state and a return, a state and a return, there can be no solution to the Palestine question.

[Badawi] Dr. George Habash, you have emphasized the importance of the internal Palestinian factor. In addition, the PLO Executive Committee, in its recent meeting in Cairo, has stressed the importance of activating the various PLO institutions. So you support this

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view. But do you really see in this a possibility to heal the rift in the Palestinian ranks and face the great challenges to the Palestine question?

[Habash] Yes, the democratic forces constitute a framework on whose basis the Palestinians gather. Bassam al-Shak'ah [secretary general of the Palestinian Grouping] yesterday launched an initiative, which, I think, could unite the Palestinians who oppose the Oslo agreement. My friend Bassam has proposed a sound political line and I agree with him on this line. However, he should pay attention to organizational and democratic issues. In the Palestinian arena now, we have the PLO and the 10 factions and there is the question of a democratic framework. Brother Bassam should deal with all these organizations. We support this political line. However, we should define a position on the issue of the PLO, the 10 factions, and the democratic framework. There is no doubt that brother Bassam could be a uniting factor for the forces that reject Oslo.

[Badawi] Following the recent Cairo meeting, the PLO Executive Committee formed a committee under Yasir 'Arafat...

[Habash, interrupting] 'Arafat is finished. Everyone should know that for the Palestinian people, 'Arafat is finished. After this bitter experience, it is impossible that 'Arafat remains a factor of unity for the Palestinian people.

[Badawi] Does this mean you will not accept an invitation to a dialogue?

[Habash] This goes without saying. This is impossible. I have suggested that comrade Bassam could be a factor of unity. When I meet Bassam, I will ask him the following: Why did he ignore the presence of democratic forces that constituted a framework with respect to this topic? I hope the reply will be positive, meaning that we cooperate with him on the basis of effectively uniting the Palestinian people. On what basis? Not on the basis of Oslo, but on the basis of the national charter, on the basis of the PLO program, on the basis of reviving the question of fighting and struggle. This is because the current balance of powers between us and Israel will never be a suitable basis for a solution.

[Badawi] Do you believe this is possible without Yasir 'Arafat and the officials of the Palestinian National Authority?

[Habash] 'Arafat is finished with respect to the Palestinian people who have any influence, with respect to the national forces, with respect to the democratic forces. All those who wish to support the Palestinian cause should forget 'Arafat.

[Badawi] Dr. George Habash, my last question. Am I to understand from what you have said, particularly after you boycotted the recent Cairo meeting, that you will not accept, even as the PFLP, which is a PLO member, the invitation to the meeting of the forthcoming PLO Executive committee expected in Tunis next month?

[Habash] Yes, this is very clear. We cannot go to Tunis. We went many times. But, once bitten, twice shy. 'Arafat deceived us not once but many times. We have had enough.

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Algeria

TNC Official: Security Situation 'Not Tragic'

LD2402131695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Djemal Ould Abbas, chairman of the foreign affairs and emigration committee in the Transitional National Council [TNC], is on a visit to Brussels to hold several meetings and talks with Belgian and EU parliamentarians and political figures.

The most important issues raised during Mr. Abbas' contacts in Brussels were the general situation in the country, prospects of overcoming the crisis, relations with European partners, and economic reforms.

The visit comes after another visit he paid last month to Strasbourg, which had permitted Mr. Abbas to give some explanations about the security situation. In this connection he confirmed that Algeria is resisting the problems of extremism.

At a news conference he held yesterday, Mr. Abbas said the security situation is not tragic to the point that had been put forward by foreign media.

More Reaction to Serkayi Prison Riot Reported

FIS Demands Urgent Investigation

BR2402153895 Madrid EL PAIS in Spanish 24 Feb 95 p 3

[Report by Ignacio Cembrero and Ferran Sales: "The FIS Is Afraid the Algerian Government Has Used Revolt in Algiers To Eliminate Its Leaders"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Madrid, Algeria—The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], which became illegal in 1992, is afraid that the security forces took advantage of the riot in the Algerian Serkayi prison (which caused the death of over 100 people, according to offical sources) to eliminate its Islamic leaders. Exiled FIS leaders contacted by EL PAIS by telephone said "This and other killings constitute the practical answer by the regime to the offer of dialogue made by the joint representative political forces in mid-January in Rome."

The exiled FIS leadership headed by Rabah Kebir in Germany admitted it lacked reliable data on the number of dead and their identities. However, the head of the FIS parliamentary delegation residing in Washington went so far as to affirm yesterday night that the number of dead prisoners is as many as 200. [passage omitted]

Kebir's associates were extremely worried yesterday about the fate of Abdelkader Hachani, who has been imprisoned in Serkayi for three years now without a trial. Hachani led the FIS from June 1991, when its two major leaders were captured, until February 1992, when he was put in prison. Hachani is currently considered the third highest-ranking FIS official.

The same sources suspect that Kacem Tayuri, another member of the former Islamic leadership, and Yejlef Cherati, who led the FIS committee of religious leaders, may have been assassinated together with several members of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), such as Ahmed el Ued.

In a communique received by EL PAIS, the FIS requests the "urgent creation of an independent and just investigation into the terrible killing," which, according to the communique, had been preceded by other "slaughter" in the prisons of El-Harrach and Berruagia.

Ait Ahmed, secretary general of the Front of Socialist Forces who is in exile in Switzerland, supported this demand. He blamed the Algerian Government for overlooking the anguish of the families caused by the postponement of the victims' identification.

The events in the Serkayi prison are interpreted by the exiled officials as the political-military answer by the regime's most extremist army factions to the offer of dialogue made by eight opposition parties one month ago in Rome. [passage omitted]

Alleged Riot Leaders Named

LD2502142595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1130 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Serkadji prison mutiny affair makes the front page of all the newspapers this morning. The prison, located high on the Casbah, has a reputation for top security which is intact, despite the escape attempt which took place during the night of 21 to 22 February. Laila Ismail has more:

[Ismail] A commission of inquiry, headed by Interior Minister Abderrahmane Meziane Cherif, is to report on its findings in 10 days' time, but what do we know for the moment? First of all, the official toll is 100 dead and 12 injured. Four prison guards were killed and 96 of the mutinous prisoners died, of whom 80 were held in connection with the wave of terrorism. The figures were given by the crisis unit that was set up to shed light on this affair, for who could possibly be behind this operation, intended to be as spectacular as, for example, the Boulevard Amirouche car bomb attack? That is a question which the commission of inquiry will no doubt be able to answer.

According to reliable sources, among the dead terrorists is Ikhlef Cherrati, member of the former Madjlis Ech-Choura [consultative council] of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], a vitriolic preacher and the very person who pronounced the first fatwas against intellectuals. He died today. He played an important role in this affair.

It all began with the recruitment of a prison guard, who smuggled four automatic pistols and six hand grenades into the prison. FIS leader Abdelkader Hachani and Abdelhak Layada [former chief of the Armed Islamic Group] were to organize the great escape, but only half the Islamist prisoners joined in the operation. Nine

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guards were taken hostage and four had their throats cut. One of them was decapitated in order to force other guards to hand over the keys to the security gates. Although the mutineers succeeded in getting past the first gates, they came up against another door, where they were confronted by the security forces, who had taken control of the prison within minutes, cutting off all escape routes, thus putting an end to the breakout attempt. Negotiations had been going on simultaneously. However, faced with the mutineers' suicidal determination, the security forces launched their attack. Once order had been restored, Layada, the ringleader, was found hiding in the bathroom. As for Hachani, his precise role in the affair will be examined by the commission of inquiry.

Finally, regarding Lembarek Boumaarafi [accused of assassinating President Mohamed Boudiaf in 1992], about whom the most conflicting rumors have circulated, he is in fact still alive.

Interior Minister To Head Investigation

LD2502184595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi has assigned Interior Minister Abderrahmane Meziane Cherif to chair the commission of inquiry into the events of 21 and 22 February in Serkadji Prison. This commission is made up of representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the leadership of the national gendarmerie, and the general directorship of national security, and has the task of shedding light on these recent events.

In his instructions to the interior minister, Mr. Sifi insisted that the commission should undertake this task resolutely and with complete transparency. This was stated in a communique from the prime minister's department today. [passage omitted]

Kamel Rezzaq Bara, president of the National Human Rights Monitoring Group, said that the Serkadji riot was not related to prison conditions or the postponement of judicial procedures, but was related to acts of violence. Mr. Kamel Rezzaq Bara indicated that in Algeria there were 116 rehabilitation institutions for less than 27,000 detainees, of whom approximately 7,500 were implicated in cases related to terrorism and sabotage.

Rezzaq Bara made his statement in Geneva, where Algeria was elected deputy chairman of the UN Human Rights Commission.

Rights Group Head Questions Use of Force

LD2502203495 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Following the mutiny at Serkadji prison, Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi asked the interior minister to chair the commission of inquiry. [passage omitted]

The National Human Rights Monitoring Group also intends to set up a commission of inquiry, which will determine the circumstances in which force was used. Mr. Kamel Rezzag Bara, president of the National Human Rights Group, spoke to Mokhan Redhaoui:

[Begin Bara recording] The mutiny that took place on Tuesday [21 February] morning in Serkadji was not aimed at obtaining an improvement in prison conditions or at speeding up judicial procedures concerning inmates' cases. Its aim was to facilitate escape, which was contained from the first hours, and there was an attempt for some time to try to end the mutiny peacefully.

Unfortunately, a large number of people were killed or wounded following the attack by the security forces. In this respect, we in the group wonder in what circumstances force was used by security forces. We intend to work toward setting up an inquiry commission which will determine the exact circumstances in which force was used in this affair. [end recording]

Criticizes Amnesty International

LD2602000695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 2200 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of the [National Human Rights] Monitoring Group, [Kamel] Rezzag Bara, has been interviewed about his recent mission to Geneva on the occasion of the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Commission.

[Begin Rezzag Bara recording] We stressed that we reject the parallel drawn by Amnesty International between, on the one hand, the violations carried out within the framework of respect for the law by the security forces with a prescriptive hierarchy set up in accordance with the constitution and the treaties ratified by Algeria, and, on the other hand, the atrocious acts and the crimes carried out by armed groups which have discarded any reference and any value. We said that it was not possible to draw such a parallel precisely because of the difference in references.

We also talked about the temptation experienced by some organizations to involve some political motives in their analysis of the human rights situation in Algeria. We said that human rights are an issue which must rise above political outbidding. This is why we stressed, among other things, that political and partisan action should be distinguished from respect for human rights vis a vis which principles and values are always the same. [end recording]

Radio Urges 'Plain Truth' To Be Told to Citizens

LD2502144395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The communications media are considered among the major tools for upholding the participation of society and the public in general. To the

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extent that the media are available in sufficient quantity and quality at the right time, the public understands the situation of the country. Fathi Saeedi has a report on the subject.

[Fathi] The saying goes: Old habits die hard. This saying can be applied to the way in which the media handle national events, especially sensitive events. Some departments have gone back to giving preferential treatment to foreign agencies and media organs and giving them news scoops.

Without beating about the bush, the number of those killed in the escape attempt from Serkadji prison was known to citizens through foreign new agencies and channels. After 24 hours, the number was confirmed in a statement by the Algerian authorities with a discrepancy of only one.

The least that can be said about such a practice is that it strikes at the credibility of the national media organs. The question of the media is still very much at issue in our country. A number of events have proved that the media handling of events by the specialized bodies is characterized by shortcomings which on many occasions harm the national interest.

Very often information filters out in drips, so that it is truncated and abridged. The information that is provided does not quench the thirst of the citizen who wants to understand what is happening. It is in the interest of the citizen and in the interest of the state at the same time that the citizen should understand, because a citizen informed by the media, who is consequently politically informed, will have an immunity which protects him from satellite dish attacks and assaults by the foreign media and their distortion of the facts.

Here we can certainly say that, when the citizen hears news about Algeria on foreign channels, he turns inward and waits in bewilderment for some clarification. Often, however, he has to wait for a long time, and if clarification comes it is too late. By the time it arrives, the distorted and falsified news and rumors have caused actual sabotage to national public opinion which is very difficult to discern, not to say impossible to repair.

Such media handling of national events leaves the field open for speculation in our country's news and for giving information which is often wrong. What is strange is that the appropriate bodies do not take action but continue to lose credibility. It is no secret to anyone that the citizens resort to foreign media channels and there are many who trust them, so that this news is the food of their daily discussions. Even more than this, this news appears to be more credible because the foreign channels rely on sources which they describe as authoritative or reliable in the different departments of the Algerian state.

It is worth mentioning that the media professionals have been pointing out this situation and this wrong handling of events for a long time. The latest example of these shortcomings is the escape attempt at Serkadji prison, about which several questions are still being posed. We should not ask the citizen to decipher symbols or to read intentions; rather, we should give him the plain truth to which he is entitled.

Security Forces Kill 19 'Criminals'

LD2502185295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement issued by the security services announced today that the security forces killed 19 criminals in a number operations between last Wednesday [22 February] and Friday in Algiers, Gulema, Setif, Blida, Mascara, Tizi Ouzou, and Chlef. The security services also succeeded in recovering a quantity of arms and ammunition during these operations.

Interior Ministry Lifts Administrative Detention on 12

LD2602173795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] On the occasion of the exhalted month of Ramadan and the festivities of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr, the Interior Ministry has decided to lift the administrative detention on 12 people currently in administrative security centers.

This decision was influenced by the family circumstances of those involved and the detainees' behavior during the detention period.

A statement by the Interior Ministry issued today explained that this step indicates the noble nature of the compassionate regulations, which are the regulations of the people and religion to which the Algerian state is strongly linked. The statement added that only 647 people are left in administrative detention throughout Algeria.

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Current Issues

LD2602234995 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 2130 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Interview with Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri by Claude Serillon in Dembri's office in Algiers on 18 February; from the "Geopolis" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Serillon] Why have all the attempts at dialogue failed? Do you have a reply, and at the same time, do you have any hopes?

[Dembri] I don't think failure is really the right word. There is certainly a desperate search for a dialogue which has been manifest, let's say, since last year. Nevertheless, we have to place this search in its historical context with regard to the events we have already experienced in the past few years, and which people are too eager to ascribe, or let's say ascribe the responsibility for, to ascribe to the current authorities.

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[Serillon] Are there things in the document published in Rome by the main opposition parties that could serve as a platform for debate here in Algiers?

[Dembri] We have already said, or at any rate I personally have said it, the positive ideas that might be contained in this platform are very fortunately the very same ideas put forward by President Liamine Zeroual in August 1994. Therefore it is very difficult to challenge anything that tends toward a global dialogue between all the political families in Algeria, and I think that this is a philosophy we cannot challenge.

We ourselves are inspired by the spirit of synthesis.

[Serillon] Do you think that staking everything on security is the only way to permit a peaceful solution?

[Dembri] You know, I think that is a journalist's way of seeing things. It is too simple. We have never staked everything on security. In any case, for the authorities which emerged from the 1994 national conference, the philosophy behind their action lies in the keyword: dialogue. We have to have a dialogue, and we have to act on the causes of the crisis in order to solve it. Or on the causes of the crises, since we have multiple crises.

If the crisis is political, we have to find political solutions. If the crisis is economic, we have to find economic solutions. If the crisis is one of a completely different nature, we need to reflect on the specific means to solve these particularities.

[Serillon] So we are expecting presidential elections by the end of the year. Why not parliamentary elections?

[Dembri] I told you that the keystone of the republic is the president.

[Serillon] But a parliament is important, isn't it?

[Dembri] Yes, it is important, but you must first of all give yourself the necessary calendar to establish the (?bodies) that confer legitimacy as a whole.

[Serillon] So parliamentary elections can be expected after the presidential elections?

[Dembri] Certainly. Immediately afterwards, and then electoral measures will be completed by muncipal elections. That's obvious.

Egypt

Official Urges 'Tangible' Israeli Progress Toward Peace

NC2402131695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Alexandria, 24 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has stated that Egypt is attempting to realize an equal and balanced peace in the region to guarantee stability for the region away from the danger of war.

He said Egypt hopes some tangible Israeli progress will be made in a positive direction toward the peace process. Egypt hopes Israel will sense how important it is to respond to the Egyptian viewpoint regarding the regional peace negotiations as a priority, to protect the region and fortify it completely against the danger of the eruption of destructive wars.

In his meeting with the leaders and members of the National Democratic Party in Alexandria, Dr. al-Baz added that Egypt's signing [of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] will depend on the extent of the guarantees and commitments Israel offers, which will be evaluated by Egyptian international law experts, who proved their competence in the Taba talks.

Dr. al-Baz clarified that the big powers base their relations with and stances on the conflict zones on their international interests and the geography, importance, and scope of the conflict. He said: We need to establish an Arab market for at least 15 years before establishing a Middle Eastern market, after which the opportunity will be given to neighboring countries to join.

He asked the national and party forces to set out a vision for Egypt for the next 25 years, confirming that the future belongs to Egypt because it is the model country in the region.

The meeting, which was held at the headquarters of the NDP's secretariat in Alexandria, was attended by the political, executive, and popular leaders and the members of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council in Alexandria.

Musa Denies Report on Intention To Sign NPT

NC2502134395 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today denied the report broadcast by Israeli radio yesterday that Egypt will sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] in April even if Israel does not sign it. Musa added that what Israel radio broadcast can be termed disinformation. Egypt, he added, is not required to sign the NPT in April since it is already a party to the treaty.

Musa pointed out that the Egyptian stance is firm; namely, that Egypt cannot accept an indefinite or long-term extension of the treaty unless Israel develops its negative position regarding the nuclear nonproliferation issue and proceeds toward joining the treaty or establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

Depending on Israel's final position, Egypt will define its stance on extending the validity of the treaty, regardless of its duration. This position will be defined and expressed in the coming NPT conference in April and

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May 1995, he added. Musa noted that Egypt insists on raising this matter now because of its support for the efforts to ban the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and its faith that complete peace cannot be attained without a security balance and conformity of obligations among the region's countries. This issue, he added, must be dealt with seriously and positively and without delay.

The foreign minister stressed that some points of agreement between the Egyptian and Israeli stands have started to emerge, but many points of disagreement are still under discussion. He added that the matter pertains to regional security in general in the face of the existence of an Israeli nuclear program of unknown dimensions. The issue also has bilateral dimensions, considering that Israel is Egypt's immediate neighbor. Thus, the ongoing talks are very important for the future of regional security and of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Egypt's position at the coming conference will depend on the outcome of these talks, he added.

Opposition Paper Claims Anti-Egypt German-French Axis

NC2402201495 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 19 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by AL-WAFD correspondent in Paris]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-WAFD has learned from exclusive sources in Paris that the European countries have yielded to the U.S. pressure concerning Egypt's stance on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. The U.S. pressure focused on restricting the crisis to Egypt and Israel only and on curbing the vast repercussions resulting from the threat of using nuclear weapons.

The U.S. pressure succeeded in introducing a French-German axis. This axis wants Egypt to sign the NPT and relinquish, what the French diplomacy calls, "oneupmanship." AL-WAFD also learned that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's visit to Germany and France has revealed that both countries want Egypt to sign the treaty. German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel told Musa that Egypt should sign the treaty. The German foreign minister refused to link Egypt's signing of the treaty to that of Israel. The German foreign minister claimed that there are problems in Israel regarding the nuclear weapons issue.

Meanwhile, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe rejected Egypt's stance that joining the treaty is contingent on Israel signing the treaty. Juppe said that Egypt's insistence is a sort of oneupmanship and urged all parties to avoid resorting to that.

French sources in Paris said that Washington had succeeded in creating a German-French axis, which opposes Egypt's stance on the NPT issue. Press sources said that this French attitude is dictated by the fact that France is the founder and sponsor of the Israeli nuclear program. The sources also emphasized the historic relations between France and Israel. The press sources pointed out that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was the Israeli Defense Ministry director in the fifties and had supervised the negotiations with France for the purchase of nuclear reactors.

Sources have revealed that the Egyptian stance that insists that Israel should sign the treaty is directly linked to Egyptian and Arab security. The sources denied reports that Egypt's stance is the fruit of temporary political maneuvers. The sources noted that Washington's threats to cut aid to Egypt reveals the strong U.S. aid to Israel. The sources said that Israel has postponed its negotiations with Egypt to end the nuclear crisis. This Israeli step is aimed at obstructing any discussion of the nuclear treaty prior to its renewal date in April, the sources added.

The sources said that invoking problems with Egypt demonstrates that the Israelis continue to show concern after 15 years of the normalization of relations and cold peace. The sources affirmed that Egypt is capable of nourishing the ongoing hesitation on the Syrian-Lebanese track. The sources maintained that the Israeli campaign accusing Egypt of opposing the Israeli interests is aimed at portraying Israel as the victim and at diminishing Israel's responsibility for the failure of peace on the Palestinian track.

Israel Urged To 'Reconsider' Nuclear Policies

NC2502080495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0705 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—AL-AHRAM has called on Israel to reconsider its positions and policies, not only toward its nuclear program and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], but also toward all Arab-Israeli negotiations within the Middle East peace process.

In its editorial in today's issue, the newspaper notes that Egypt does not take nervous positions. Calm and objective dialogue is Egypt's only method, and just and lasting peace is its strategic objective, it says.

The paper adds that Cairo could have refused to receive Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres as a response to the irresponsible statements which Israel tried to use to confuse Egypt's position on Israel's nuclear program.

AL-AHRAM says Cairo could also have escalated the dispute over Israel's nuclear program and the NPT in response to Israel's attempt to insult the first foreign ministry to be established in the region, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

The paper commends Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's statement at the end of his talks with Shim'on Peres in Cairo that despite differences over some points, the peace process will continue.

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Saudi Paper: Peres Refused Musa Access to Nuclear Plant

NC2602155895 Paris AFP in English 1447 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Feb 26 (AFP)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has refused to allow his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa to visit a nuclear plant in Dimona in southern Israel, a Saudi paper reported here Sunday [26 February].

A senior official from the Egyptian foreign ministry would not confirm or deny the report to AFP.

But he added that "Egypt has always called for the Dimona reactor to be submitted to international inspection and Israel has rejected this demand."

According to the Saudi daily AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Peres refused the visit on Thursday during talks in Cairo aimed at defusing a row over Israel's nuclear programme.

Musa asked him "for the third time" since the start of the dispute "to visit the Dimona reactor" in the southern Negev desert. When he asked why Peres was against such a visit, the Israeli minister replied with a laugh: "You'll see there's nothing there."

But Peres agreed in principle to hold talks on submitting Israel nuclear installations to international inspection two years after concluding peace treaties with all the countries in the region, including Iran, Iraq and Libya, the paper added.

Egypt has rallied other Arab countries around its threat to refuse to sign a renewal of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) due in April if Israel does not join.

Israel, which has never confirmed Western reports that it has 200 nuclear warheads, refuses to adhere saying it is the only country whose existence is threatened.

Peres said after his talks in Cairo that there was still some disagreement but that talks would continue in the future.

'Firm' Nuclear Stance, Israeli 'Allegations' Discussed

NC2602151095 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Commentary by Muhammad al-Sa'id Fa'iq: "A Firm Egyptian Stance on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Issue"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has denied the allegations broadcast by Israeli radio that Egypt will sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in April even if Israel does not sign it. He added that these allegations can be termed disinformation, because Egypt is not required to sign the Treaty, since it is already a party to it.

The Israeli radio allegations are part of a concerted Israeli media campaign against Egypt's firm stance on banning the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Since it is hard to change or move the Egyptian position in the opposite direction, why not cast doubt on the Egyptian stance, launch trial balloons, and disseminate false or distorted information so that some in Israel might study the Egyptian reaction and try to break the constants in Cairo's official position on this issue, which directly relates to Egypt's national security?

From the start Egypt has made its position clear regarding the nuclear issue and Israel's nuclear program. It is neither reasonable nor acceptable for Egypt to accept an indefinite or long- term extension of the Treaty if Israel does not improve its negative position on the issue and proceed positively toward joining the Treaty and declaring the Middle East a nuclear-free zone. Out of a sound awareness of the requirements of its national and pan-Arab security and on the basis of the principles of international law and legality, Egypt rejects any discrimination in the treatment of the Arab states and Israel. It also rejects seeing the world community act indifferently while Israel's nuclear program is left without supervision or control, particularly since Israel does not feel embarrassed to acknowledge its possession of hundreds of nuclear bombs.

Since the subject of extending the validity of the Treaty has been raised for discussion this year, Egypt has reiterated its firm position on the need to highlight the universality of this Treaty. Since the sixties Egypt has been involved in debating this Treaty, even before it was signed, and was one of the first countries to sign it. Egypt is not standing against the Treaty now but rejects the continuation of the erroneous circumstances resulting from the Treaty, which neither provides protection for the non-nuclear states that have signed the Treaty nor puts pressure on the nuclear states that refuse to join it.

Israel's insistence on possessing a nuclear arsenal in spite of the peace process, which all concerned Arab states have joined, means that Israel insists on upsetting the balance of power in the Middle East. It could also blow up the peace process, which must primarily depend on parallel and balanced obligations by the two sides to the process. Israel's attempt to brush aside the dangers to Egypt's national security and to the security of the regional states resulting from the existence of an Israeli nuclear program of unspecified dimensions can only mean an attempt to brandish nuclear weapons and use threats to achieve superiority and domination, at a time when the world is discussing peace and stability. All in all, these are unacceptable positions that are superseded by events in the region and run counter to the constants of Egypt's foreign policy, which governs its outlook for the future of regional security and nuclear proliferation in the region.

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Musa on Christopher Trip, Sanctions on Iraq

NC2602152695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry has received confirmation of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's upcoming tour of the region. Speaking to correspondents today, Musa said the tour dates will be announced in the next few days.

Asked about attempts to lift the sanctions on Iraq, Musa said everyone must comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions. He added: Efforts must be made to assist the Iraqi people in these difficult times, as long as the existing Security Council resolutions allow for measures to be taken concerning humanitarian issues, such as food and medicine.

Regarding the Security Council's resolutions and sanctions against Iraq, the foreign minister said these resolutions and sanctions are not eternal or everlasting. He said he hoped the circumstances will permit these resolutions and sanctions to be reconsidered.

Musa Welcomes Saudi-Yemeni Border Agreement

NC2602151395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1440 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—Egypt today welcomed the Saudi-Yemeni agreement concluded last night to resolve the border dispute between the two countries.

In a statement today, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that Egypt hopes the two sisterly countries can end their differences. He pointed out that the agreement reached between Saudi Arabia and Yemen sets an example to be followed in resolving all inter-Arab disputes. He said he hoped the Saudi-Yemeni agreement would be the starting point for settling all the other outstanding inter-Arab differences within the framework of the Arab League.

'Fundamentalists' Killed by Own Bomb in al-Minya

NC2502072095 Paris AFP in English 0143 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Al-Minya, Egypt, Feb 25 (AFP)—Two Islamic fundamentalists were killed Friday [24 February] in Upper Egypt when a bomb they were carrying exploded, police said.

The blast happened as the two men were hiding in fields near the village of Kowm al-Rahib near Samalut, 225 kilometres (135 miles) south of Cairo, police said.

Two other men, armed with automatic rifles, escaped unhurt and fled the scene, police added, quoting eyewitnesses.

The incident brought to 670 the number of people killed since March 1992, when fundamentalists began their campaign against the authorities, according to a count compiled by AFP from police sources.

Since last summer the campaign has been concentrated in the province of al-Minya.

'Terrorists' Identified

NC2502155095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1455 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—An official source in the Ministry of Interior has stated that the two terrorists who were killed in al-Minya Governorate last night were Hasan 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Karim, born in Mallawi in al-Minya, and Jamal Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman, born in al-Minya.

The active terrorists were killed when the explosive device they were preparing went off. [passage omitted]

The official added that terrorist Hasan 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Hakim was a leading terrorist was a leading terrorist in al-Minya. He was responsible for making contacts with fugitive terrorists abroad and for harboring terrorist elements coming from abroad to carry out their operations inside the country.

This terrorist plotted and prepared all terrorist operations in al-Minya. He also took part in many operations that targeted the security forces and was wanted in many incidents.

The second terrorist, Jamal Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman, was responsible for making explosive devices for the organization. He was wanted in connection with a number of cases, including the case of the military wing of the so-called Islamic Group. He was also involved in a number of incidents that sought to assassinate police officers.

The security forces found an automatic rifle, two pistols, a 9-mm Star and a 9-mm Beretta, in addition to a locally made shotgun and a large amount of ammunition on their bodies.

Coptic Christian Killed by Islamic 'Militants'

NC2502201895 Paris AFP in English 1531 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] al-Minya, Egypt, Feb 25 (AFP)—Islamic militants on Saturday shot dead a Coptic Christian and seriously wounded another in an attack in southern Egypt, police said.

The militants opened fire killing Rajwan Rashid Basilious and wounding Nash'at Lam'i before fleeing the area around Samalut, about 230 kilometers (140 miles) south of Cairo, police said.

Basilious was suspected of informing police about militant activities.

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A total of 671 people have been killed since March 1992 when militants launched a campaign of violence to topple Egypt's secular government.

Interior Minister on Release of Repentant 'Terrorists'

NC2502202895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1920 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi announced that around 60 repentant extremists will be released very soon who have declared their complete rejection of all acts of violence and terrorism after becoming aware of how corrupt the ideas about Islam and Muslims they believed in were.

In press statements made today, he said that the death of the two terrorists earlier today in Samalut, al-Minya Governorate, was a message from God Almighty. He noted that forged documents and organizational papers confirming their membership in a terrorist organization were seized with them. He added: These terrorists were preparing for a terrorist operation scheduled to be carried out this morning in al-Minya Governorate but their hopes were dashed for reasons beyond their control when the device exploded and killed them. He described them as a group of killers and criminals who do not have religion or morals.

The interior minister stressed that there is a ferocious onslaught on Egypt because it is one of the major countries in the region. He said that some countries are exploiting the conditions in Egypt to damage its economy and impede the major strides in the successful development process.

Minister al-Alfi added: The picture will be clear to everyone once it has become known that the objective is to attain power. Egypt has succeeded in making terrorism abate and is now chasing the remnants of the fugitive terrorists who are in a real crisis resulting from their haphazard and ignorant actions of killing innocent people for no reason.

The minister praised the citizens' cooperation with the police organs in the latter's major victory over terrorism. He stressed the need to cooperate with the security organs still more and emphasized the media's role in enlightening the populace and also the need for public opinion to feel that the terrorist elements are not only a danger to the state and security but also to everybody because we are all in one boat.

Hasan al-Alfi explained that terrorist action is not an internal affair or restricted to Upper Egypt or to certain governorates but is the work of international groups that are behind all the terrorist operations and that finance, train, and give tasks to the terrorists. He stressed that what is happening is a ferocious onslaught, not only against Egypt but also against all the Islamic Arab countries with the aim of creating disturbances and instability.

Regarding the resumption of Nile tourism, the interior minister said that it is now back to normal and this confirms the victories recently achieved by the police organs with the help of the citizens, which restored safety and stability.

Regarding the release of a number of repentant terrorists in the coming few hours, he said that religious enlightenment is continuing. He added that there is an agreement with the men of religion to enlighten them so that they can return to their senses after becoming aware that what they used to believe in is very remote from religion and that what they did was intentional damage to religion.

Part One of al-Ansari's Letter to Clinton

NC2302214595 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 19 Feb 95 pp 1,3

[Article by Mahfuz al-Ansari: "Personal for President Clinton: (1) We love America, But!! The Story of Carter and Butrus-Ghali"—punctuation as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. President "Bill Clinton:" This is a personal talk that "I am sending" to you in a "very personal" but open letter. Perhaps you will change your calculations, perhaps you will reconsider your country's recent positions on Egypt, perhaps you will call for a "pause" to revise the "advice" of your advisers and the ideas of your close friends in Tel Aviv, perhaps you will return to the balance of "right and justice" on the ticket of which you fought your election campaign—justice for your citizens and the world. They believed you, gave you their confidence and vote, and you won the Presidency.

At the start of our personal talk, I would like to assure you that we in Egypt—people and government—love America and the American people. We love your democratic system "even though we cannot digest" all of it, for you know and we know that this "model" system of yours is a result of a continuing accumulation of culture, education, and practice. We cannot adopt it all at once but we are seriously trying.

We love your "way of life,"—a life of "overconsumption" and a society of prosperity which rejects austerity and the tightening of belts. We are also a "civilized society" and that is why we are imitating and importing your life "styles," like "Coca-Cola," "hamburgers," and other products.

We also love your "free economy," its adventurous spirit, its domineering and tyrannical initiative, its motivation, and its calculated and miscalculated risk.

Believe me, we are seriously trying to "adopt" your system and to apply it on the widest scale. But you know and we know that after "love," after conviction, and after decision, there are "conditions," tools, and people. All these conditions are required and must be fulfilled. With desire, decision, and love we cannot "print an

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original copy" of a society and apply it to another society. Social sciences, and above all economics, require a transition period, which "we promise you will be as short as possible."

On an individual level, we in Egypt "love" the great U.S. Presidents who were your predecessors. The Egyptian people still view them with appreciation, esteem, and great admiration.

We still remember President Eisenhower for his fair and great stand toward the 1956 tripartite aggression against Egypt. He and your country stood on the side of justice and forced Israel, England, and France to depart.

The Egyptians remember with love and admiration President John Kennedy, despite his "short" appearance in the theater of world and U.S. politics.

The Egyptian people still appreciate the great President George Bush for his wisdom, sagacity, and farsightedness. Without being asked by President Mubarak, he wrote off Egypt's $7 billion debt to the United States. He contacted all the creditor nations—members of the Paris Club—and asked them to cancel half of Egypt's debts. This half of the debts, 20 percent of which is still pending, is still the subject of negotiation, bargaining, and pressure.

Mr. President Clinton, they say that "you and your administration have given direct or indirect instructions to the Club to dry up the "saliva" of the Egyptians and to blackmail them before this remaining debt can be written off!!

A strange dissimilarity exists here between a wise and great President like Bush, who canceled the debt and pressured his friends to follow suit, without our request or plea, and out of his gratitude for Egypt's noble stand, and a "young" U.S. President, who ordered a halt to the march of the bandwagon.

Mr. President, frankly speaking, not all our life is full of love and admiration for the U.S. Presidents, even though we love and admire America, its people, its system, and its technology. For example, the Egyptian people liked President Kennedy but "couldn't stand" and didn't like his successor "Johnson." I think the feeling was mutual. I think that the feeling of the Egyptians was the same as the feeling of the Americans toward President Johnson, who was forced by your people and your Democratic Party not to run for another term in office.

The Egyptians' lack of love and respect for "Johnson" was not because of an automatic impression alone; his stances and aggressive and biased policy against Egypt strengthened this sincere feeling. It might be surprising that the aggressiveness of this president hit the Egyptians violently and hit the Americans with horror, death, and panic. It was Johnson who involved your country in that insane war in Vietnam which cost about 100,000 lives, incapacitated over 250,000 people, and cost approximately $200 billion. It was he who caused the Vietnam complex for American youths. It was Johnson who tried to cover up his domestic failure and the massacre he perpetrated against the peoples of Vietnam and Cambodia. This massacre caused a great shock to the American people and to other peoples.

He tried to cover up the failure and the Vietnam crime with a similar crime and with a parallel war in a sensitive region. He instigated, supported, and armed Israel to launch an aggression on Egypt and the Arab countries in June 1967, enabling it to occupy territories belonging to Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine up to the present time. Therefore, President "Johnson" was not an American hero in the view of our people. He did not win any measure of appreciation or love by our people in Egypt.

Mr. President, my talk to you today is not a message of love for or flirtation with the American people and their feats and is not a review of "romance" or "revenge" stories that bring us closer to or separate us from U.S. Presidents. Today's talk is primarily "political." Politics in its straight and twisted logic and in its clarity and gloom is mainly about relations among states, peoples, and leaders. It is about policies and practices drafted and applied on the ground by heads of state, administrations, and regimes. Consequently, knowledge of these historic relations and these "romantic facts" that link Egypt and its people to America and its people is an important issue, especially in times of "gloom," times of deception, distortion, and slander.

Let me tell you a story about a U.S. President whom you personally like, listen to, and use as an adviser and envoy. He is President Carter.

When the Egyptian-Israeli peace talks foundered in 1978 because of Israeli intransigence, greed, and arrogance and the impasse reached the point of the full suspension of the talks and estrangement—as is the case now—President Carter wanted to break the deadlock. He contacted President al-Sadat and [Israeli Prime Minister] Begin and asked them to send high-level delegations to Washington for a round of talks in Blair House which he himself attended, just as you did in the same place a few days ago.

The two delegations went to Washington. Carter met with them separately—before the general meeting—to review their positions, the causes of the crisis, and the knot at which everything stopped.

Mr. President, do you know that it is the same knot that exists today—autonomy, its concept, boundaries, the Palestinian rights, the elections, and so forth.

Mr. President Clinton, I beg you to read the following words carefully, especially as this story that I relate has come from U.S. professor and politician "William Quandt."

Carter went to chief Egyptian negotiator Dr. Butrus-Ghali and told him: "Don't budge from your stand on the Palestinian issue and self-rule. Don't pay attention to

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Israeli pressure and talk. Stick to your stand and concept, express and defend them well. We are with you." Carter continued: However, do not embarrass us with one-upmanship or overenthusiasm. Stick to your view and stance without emotion but with persuasion and logic. Don't let anyone know about this meeting and advice. Everything will be all right.

Carter left. Meetings were held, some in his presence and some in the presence of Vance. The crisis was overcome and the peace agreement was signed after a few months. The story, as we said, is by "William Quandt."

Carter was not biased in favor of Egypt. He could not be accused of being hostile to Israel or of anti-Semitism!! Carter was an arbiter. He knew the breaks and controls of the job of a "judge." He knew that justice is a basis of judgment and a condition for mediation and intervention. With his farsightedness, he knew that the age of injustice is short, that just peace is permanent, and that he should work for peace and not war.

You, Mr. "Great!!," are in the same situation and position today. What have you done?!

We have followed, read, and lived this climate charged with clouds of doubt, preparedness, deception, and attack. These clouds are coming from Washington and Tel Aviv as if there is a written symphony with one conductor, who distributes roles in harmony and unison. He moves brilliantly and with calculated steps on all fronts and on all the centers of power in your capital and in the Jewish capital.

A few days ago, the "NEW YORK TIMES" published an article about a "warning" that Warren Christopher and other American leaders issued to 'Amr Musa during his stay in Washington, where he participated in the meetings of the six-sided ministerial conference held at your invitation.

The words of the article were sharp, far from the spirit of "friendship," and not in line with the good relations between us.

The "warning" says the United States has shown self-restraint and has been trying hard not to explode the "dispute" over the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] into a major crisis with grave repercussions and consequences for Egypt.

The "warning" has turned the dispute into an Egyptian-U.S. dispute and has dropped Israel with its huge nuclear arsenal from the equation.

The "warning" criticizes Egypt's stance on the NPT for being anti-American and against the higher national interests of the United States.

The warning "cautions" Egypt and draws its attention to the gravity of its attempt to work politically in the Arab arena and the Nonaligned Movement to gather support for the application of the NPT and for the need for all states to sign it and to accept all kinds of inspection and control.

The warning says that any Egyptian activity in this direction deserves punishment, represented by a "halt in U.S. aid to Egypt."

Frankly, this talk is strange and rejected. It cannot be "justified" by a love hidden in the hearts of the Egyptian people for America and its people but not for all of its presidents.

The list is long. The talk continues. Allow me, esteemed Sir, to send the remainder of my open letter to you tomorrow.

Part Two of al-Ansari's Letter

NC2402094995 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 20 Feb 95 pp 1, 3

[Article by Mahfuz al-Ansari: "Personal for President Clinton: (2) We Thank You for Your Positive Attack!! Do Not Believe False Appearances?!"; punctuation as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. President Bill Clinton: Yesterday I whispered to you about the "attraction of Egypt and the Egyptians" for America and the Americans. But perhaps I forgot to finish "the love story and its terms" as far as the Egyptians are concerned. When Egypt "loves," it does so for the sake of Egypt. Its love is impulsive, spontaneous, and innocent. It is motivated by a genuine instinct. When it becomes angry or when it hates, it is motivated by the same pure instinct. It is hurt when its innocence is met with deception, its love with grudges, its spontaneity with collusion, its frankness with lies, and its good treatment with maltreatment. What angers and disturbs Egypt most are the "double standards" and discrimination in treatment, which is the embodiment of injustice. When the moment of anger comes, it reflects everyone's anger. And if a challenge is imposed on it, it faces it with the stance and the word of one man. Don't let appearances deceive you and don't allow "negative reports" or those based on ignorance to lead you astray. The potential of these people is enormous, their ability to give is unlimited, and their endurance and patience are too great to speak of.

I agree with you and with the reports of "your agencies and men" that your country, in addition to the accumulation of spontaneous love we hold for it, has formed and recruited an army or "American party" that is huge, influential, in control, and that reaps benefits here in our country, Egypt. This party was created from the "aid", the "agency" [reference to USAID], brokerage, trade, consultation, and many other factors. But "believe me" when I say that no one from this army or party, "the hidden and the visible," could confront, defend, object, or even speak up. This is not because of oppression, persecution, or the repression of an opinion or a viewpoint, but because of "loyalty." It is because of inherent

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faith in "the sense of justice" arising from a firm and spontaneous rejection of aggression and injustice. An exception from this "law" governing the minds, consciences, unity, and stance of the Egyptians could be "a treacherous depravation" or the "betrayal of a spy," which are of no value or importance.

I suppose it would be appropriate, now that we have raised this, for you "Mr. President" to ask your men to inform you about the positions of the writers, thinkers, intellectuals, and businessmen—and there are many—with whom you are linked by the sacred bonds of mutual interests. Ask your men here to provide you with the position and the opinion of friends in Egypt to learn what they write, how they comment, and what they propose. Ask them if there is anybody who supports the destruction of the Egyptian economy through the devaluation of the pound. Ask them what friends have said in response to your pressure and the pressure of your administration for "capitulation" in the face of Israel's nuclear power, hegemony, and "monopoly," while we are supposed to complaisantly sign the treaty "for the love and appreciation of Tel Aviv."

Let me tell you a new secret that completes the "law of Egypt." In times of crisis, when it faces danger, and when it finds itself facing the challenge of dignity, the challenge of justice, and the challenge of survival, this law "brings Egypt together as one" and expresses itself in a "stance" through which it gears itself to give. The new secret is that Egypt and its people are always in need of "an extraordinary thing" to happen to break the ordinary and change the "routine" of life, behavior, even relations. It would be perfect if this "need" for the "unknown" came from abroad, were imposed on it, if it were "provocative" and inciting. It would be perfect if its "greedy" knife penetrated unjustly and licentiously.

Ironically, and let me reveal to you our secret, when this unknown comer makes his "visits," he finds misleading or tempting appearances. To be more accurate, these tempting appearances are like these:

There is the impression of an estrangement between the government and the people because of incidental, high prices, unemployment tightening the noose around the youth, or poor administrative performance torturing citizens and consuming their time and nerves.

There is an impression that the activities of the extremist groups, the rising voice of political Islam, the spread of the veil among girls and women, the martyrdom of some policemen, an attack on a public figure, or other similar acts are placing the regime in a crisis and the country in a state of rage, and that things are so shaky that a little push, some slight pressure, would make things fall apart.

In these times the Egyptian fishhook gets its catch!

This "covetous side" comes. Regrettably, you have always been with, been behind this covetous side, which is always Israel.

The attacks begin with campaigns of rumor, propaganda, and pressure by any means. Then the "damned media machine" begins to function, carrying all sorts of campaigns against us and spreading them worldwide.

Here we return to "the Egyptian secret." When this hellish operation gets to work and begins to release its venom to create a conflict between the people and the government, all the people of Egypt, educated and uneducated, learned and unlearned, politicized and nonpoliticized, sense the danger around them, feel that a conspiracy is being hatched against them, and realize that injustice is threatening them.

Believe me, in such moments the rulers of modern Egypt have always enjoyed overwhelming popularity. These are the times when there is cohesion and unity between the leadership and the people, and these are the times when Egyptian patriotism is at its best. I have witnessed this for four decades:

In the time of King Faruq. When he had his dispute with the al- Dubarah Palace, the headquarters of the British high commissioner. When things reached a climax in 1942 with the events of 4 February [when the king accepted an ultimatum from the high commissioner, accepting his demands rather than resign], the king enjoyed overwhelming popularity, overshadowing the popularity of the majority party and almost knocking it out.

In the time of Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, whenever he was the target of an attack from your country, from the press of the West, or from Israel.

In the time of Anwar al-Sadat, when he went to Jerusalem and a fierce campaign against him and Egypt was unleashed. All Egypt went out to receive him upon his return from Israel, perhaps not out of support for his surprise or initiative—something about which the people knew little; it was spoilt by Rabin's cold and ridiculous speech at the Knesset—but certainly out of support for the leader and to emphasize some unity and cohesion between the people and the government.

The people went out to defend Egypt and to present it to the world as one, united fabric in delicate and decisive times. They did that whenever a new initiative was taken or whenever there was a need to stand up to difficult challenges, to confront an injustice, or to beat off the ambitions of others or the rancor of those who imagine that the time is theirs and that they are the heirs to the forces of the region and its cultural, human, and civilized foundations, and that the condition for gaining this status is attacking or besieging Egypt.

Then with Mubarak, particularly in these times and following achievements, initiatives, and an effective and influential role in a peace process he adopted from the start and stayed with as it progressed on various fronts and as it endeavored to complete this move by closing

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the chapter of war, enmity, and provocation and opening the chapter of peace, stability, and cooperation.

Now, when we are nearing the end and Mubarak has redoubled his efforts and sincere intentions, Israel, and some circles in your administration. Mr. U.S. President, think that the time has come to exclude Egypt as a partner in the post-peace era. You, or them—the people in Tel Aviv—might allow it to be present within the region and with its countries but never as a partner, never as a partner. This is how they think.

Hence the campaign, the attacks, the rumors, the threats, the hostility, the reneging on pledges and agreements, the seizure of more territories and more settlements, and the concentration on the nuclear issue.

As President Mubarak said, this was an odious fabrication of a crisis so that "you can cover up" or they can cover up more important things. It is a crisis of "dense smoke" and great clamor, a crisis in which all countries are involved, large and small, members of the nuclear club, the United States, Russia, China, England, and France, and those seeking to join this club "by consent," force, or by stealth.

They thought they could incite the world against Egypt with this crisis.

In my view, esteemed U.S. President, this is aimed at covering up the scheme to pull back from the peace plan.

Do you know the result? This result is our "secret."

It is the Egyptians' law and principle. All Egypt is one position, one man. The rulers and the people are against what you and your friends in Israel are doing.

The majority and the opposition in Egypt reject what you are propagating and trying to impose on us and on others.

Egypt stands for peace and is with peace. It will not retreat from its just stance under any pressure or threats for the sake of implementing the principle of land in return for peace, for the sake of a full withdrawal from the Golan in return for full recognition between Syria and Israel, or for the sake of retrieving all the Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and the Palestinian people's rights without discrimination or racism.

This is the position of all the Egyptian people.

If you do not believe me, then ask your men to convey the picture to you.

Egypt, in times of tribulation, challenge, crises, and moments of conflict, is not the Egypt you see. It changes quickly. The issue is no more than "dusting" off some dirt that covered the face or part of it, no more than rust affecting the "behavior of people," some docility imposed by familiarity and customs and a stagnant life that weakens the spirit and blows out the flame of zeal.

But they all quickly revert to their proud selves.

Briefly, will you permit me to thank you as we come to the end of our talk today on my open letter to your esteemed person, to thank you for this organized and "unjust" attack coordinated by some of your circles and Israel, because it has removed much of the dust and rust that have accumulated on us, roused us, unleashed all the potential of resistance and rejection, and provoked us and our latent strength, which is capable of challenging and resisting. Our talk continues so that we might complete our letter to you.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Speaks at Mizran Mosque Inauguration

LD2602205495 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1547 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Speech by Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi at the inauguration of the Mizran Mosque Center of Learning in Tripoli; date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate. [passage omitted] There is now a meeting [word indistinct]. After 100 years they said what is happening in Egypt and Tunisia threatens the security of America, Europe, and NATO. America, which is beyond the Atlantic Ocean and is the Western half of the earth, is threatened by what is taking place in Egypt and Tunisia. [Word indistinct] America, NATO will assume the mission of defending the security of Europe and America. [passage omitted]

The NATO secretary announced that he will meet the ambassadors of Egypt, Tunisia, and Mauritania. They said that Mauritania, which is situated in the Atlantic Ocean, is linked to the Mediterranean. Thus, the aim is to look for the borders of the Arab homeland so that is can be colonized once again.

We said that it is a dangerous thing that the NATO secretary meets the ambassadors of Arab and Islamic states and discusses with them Islamic fundamentalism or the security of North Africa.

What took place is the following: When the Arab countries heard that statement, they issued statements and said we have no knowledge of this meeting, and the NATO secretary [word indistinct].

Regrettably, we said that he said on Friday that the meeting will take place on the upcoming Friday. The meeting took place on Friday as we said. The NATO secretary met the ambassadors of the Zionist enemy, Egypt, Tunisia, and Mauritania separately. I do not know whether he met the ambassador of Morocco. They said that they cannot meet the ambassador of Algeria because of its circumstances. Naturally, one cannot talk about Libya because it is considered as being on the opposite side. In the end the whole action is against Libya and the Arab nation.

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Regrettably, this meeting took place yesterday. We are allowing our brothers in all Arab countries and the Islamic world hear of the steps adopted by the Christian-Jewish alliance toward the Arabs and Islam. This a well-arranged plan that is being implemented. We will resist it, and will not remain silent.

Before this meeting, a meeting of the European interior ministers with the North African Muslim Arab interior ministers took place to discuss the same subject. [passage omitted]

These measures that are being taken against us now are very dangerous, in the same manner as they were adopted in 1881, and before that against the Arab countries. [passage omitted]

It is the same thing now. They are repeating exactly the same thing again. They are following the same steps. In fact, we cannot remain silent about this. We cannot be polite to our brothers in Egypt, Tunisia, the Maghreb, Mauritania, or any other country over this dangerous issue, because it leads us to war, to confrontation. Thus, we cannot sell ourselves once more as they want. They say that, and what I am saying could be broadcast by other radio stations. The NATO permanent council officially approved in a meeting at the level of the ambassadors of the 16 member countries that form the alliance, this month, February, a document presented by Spain. Just to remind you, they asked Spain to submit a document, because Spain is a friend of the Arabs. [Words indistinct] they asked Spain to claim that the proposal was hers. We want our brothers in the Arab countries to hear these words, and hear them being analyzed. This is not a Spanish document, but a document from the whole of NATO. It is a colonialist document. This document is the first of its kind since NATO was created. It is the first time that we see a colonialist document in this form. It constitutes a new comprehensive program of this alliance's policy toward North Africa and the Middle East.

This document seeks to safeguard the security of the southern and eastern flanks of the alliance. By east they mean the borders with Russia and all those areas; they will bring Poland into the NATO alliance, and they will also include North Africa. In the end, they want the NATO alliance to be the world military organization [words indistinct]. The Christian Western powers will be the states that control the world militarily and economically. The dollar will become the currency of everyone. The NATO alliance will be the military force that can intervene in any state and create any state. [passage omitted]

As for the stories about the threat to peace, famine and relief and things like this are all excuses that they have put forward for some 100 years. We have seen them as colonialists. They colonized us and they emerged as they really are. [passage omitted]

This plan seeks to create stability for the alliance in the Mediterranean. They said that the problems that made them meet and made them feel that the alliance was threatened and that Europe was threatened, first by wholesale illegal emigration from North Africa, Arab, and Islamic countries; meaning that there is emigration to Europe from those countries.

Afterward, the question of terrorism. They used to shout about terrorism. They used to shout that anything was terrorism. In centers of learning like this one they say that we are training terrorists and we are creating Mojahedin so that they go and fight in the name of Jihad and terrorism. [passage indistinct]

The spread of long distance weapons. This means they will intervene like they did in Iraq. They will come to inspect us and ask us where are our factories, what are our plans, and what weapons do we have. They have been making long distance weapons. However, we are not allowed to make long distance weapons. If they have missiles to hit us with, it is our right to make missiles to hit them with. If they transgress against us we should transgress against them. If they make a peace agreement, we do likewise. But the nations have rejected and resisted making peace under their bayonets. It is a serious subject. The missiles, the long distance weapons like planes, submarines, or missiles, they are discussing them. What does it mean they are discussing them. They have said that these pose a danger to the security of the alliance. This means that they will be destroying these weapons. [passage omitted]

This is the heresy movement [zandaqah]. Now NATO officials are holding meetings with Arab ambassadors, and other meetings are to come with interior ministers and others. They are fighting Islamic fundamentalism. What is Islamic fundamentalism? What we are doing now is Islamic fundamentalism: We are returning to teaching the foundations of religion, the Koran, Arabic, Soufism. This is Islamic fundamentalism. Our work today in the Mizran mosque, in the Mizran center, our opening of this center for all the inhabitants of this town, irrespective of their education levels and ages, this is Islamic fundamentalism. They consider this as a threat and are fighting it. This means that to them Islam must be silenced and brought to an end, and there is no revival for it. The aim is to empty the Arab nation of its spiritual substance and then it will be easy to colonize and dominate it. They want domination. They would not object if Christian fundamentalism came to Libya, but they prohibit Islamic fundamentalism.

We address ourselves in our brothers in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania who had a meeting yesterday with the NATO secretary. They discussed Islamic fundamentalism, among other topics. Islamic fundamentalism, brothers, against [word indistinct]. The work we are doing today here, the 26th of Ramadan, in [words indistinct], in the mosque of Mizran, with the opening of the Mizran center is considered an act of Islamic fundamentalism. To the meeting of last Friday in Brussels it is considered terrorism, a threat to the security of Europe,

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the Mediterranean, and the security of America that is on the western side of the planet, the security of NATO. It is not us who have written this. It is they who have written this. Look: Islamic fundamentalism which, the NATO secretary general said, is the biggest challenge to Western Europe since the end of the Cold War. This means he said that Islamic fundamentalism was the most dangerous challenge to Western Europe after the end of the Soviet Union, the end of communism. In another statement that caused protests and that they tried to cover up, he said that Islam is an evil ideology just like communism. Likewise, the American ambassador in Italy—let our brothers in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, and Mauritania listen—said that confrontation has ended between communism and Christianity, and confrontation now begins between Christianity and Islam, with the Arabs at the forefront. He said that confrontation was at the heart of Berlin between East and West, and now it has moved to Rome between the north and south. As is known, Rome is the home of Catholicism, the starting point of Roman colonialism.

Their words were followed by practical deeds: Very regrettably they held a meeting with the ambassadors of Arab-Islamic states. They have also met the interior ministers of Arab-Islamic countries, and they have still meetings to come mentioned in this memorandum of theirs. He says to them: The dangers of Islamic fundamentalism must not be played down. We, on our side, say to our brothers in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, in Libya, and everywhere: We must not play down the dangers of these meetings, this document, and this scheme. There are many dangers coming if this scheme continues without resistance. He wanted to reduce the danger of the situation by saying: There must not be a misunderstanding, because the intentions of the alliance could be construed as constituting a threat. He does not realize that these intentions precisely constitute a dangerous threat to Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, and all Arab countries.

He has admitted that he became involved in a threat to these countries. He also mentioned the Israelis. He wrote: Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania, and Israel between parentheses. This means that the Israelis are involved. The Israelis are NATO's fifth column in the Arab countries.

He said that this plan, as written in the memo, included three phases: The first one begins with dialogue, which will be in the form of direct contacts with the ambassadors of the concerned countries that have been mentioned; [al-Qadhdhafi reads from the document] reaching the final goal that consists in a situation where a permanent mechanism is established. This is the alliance phase. This is the third phase [as heard; no mention of second phase]. What is this permanent mechanism? This means the colonization of these countries. There is no permanent mechanism apart from the colonization of these countries. [passage omitted]

The first phase is dialogue with the ambassadors. The second phase is dialogue at a higher level than that of the ambassadors. It is believed that even the presidents of these countries might meet. The third phase consists in setting up a permanent mechanism with a view to reaching the alliance phase, in other words, the colonization phase of this bloc [referring to North Africa]. [passage omitted]

Maybe in 1881, 1882, and 1911 there was no one like us to warn and let people know. No voices were heard and no means were there to make them heard. Now, we are here and we are capable of talking and acting. Therefore, we warn our brothers in Egypt and the Arab Mashriq [Middle East]. As regards the Gulf, it is not independent and it is under full military occupation. We do not blame our brothers there. They are nice and kind and they are with us, but the poor ones do not have any power, and power belongs to God. However, we warn our brothers in Egypt and Mauritania that these steps may lead to the return of colonialism [words indistinct]. Let us warn them now so that they do not resort to the excuse of terrorism and threats to peace.

They started it. We are here in our country, the land of our fathers and forefathers. We did not decide to cross the sea or the ocean. If they are able to manufacture weapons we will manufacture weapons. But if we agreed on the destruction of weapons we are prepared to destroy the weapons and if we (?agreed) on peace, let it be peace. However, for one to possess weapons and the other not is illogical. If we were capable of manufacturing a weapon similar to theirs, it is our right to manufacture it according to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter; for self-defense.

They themselves admit that peace was stable between East and West because of the balance of arms. [passage omitted]

The Israelis are refusing to give up more than 200 nuclear missiles, in addition to their bacteriological and chemical weapons. And America refuses to allow anyone to talk about the Israelis or inspect them, or even for Israel to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty as Libya and Egypt and all the Arab countries, or most of them have done.

Why? They said there should be a balance. It is the right of the Israelis to possess these weapons against the Arabs.

You are the ones who are threatening us, threaten our waters, our independence and industry, inspect us and destroy us as in Iraq and Somalia, everywhere, in Palestine and Lebanon. How is it that we should not possess weapons? We must have the weapons to deter you.

One of the existing comedies O brothers!, is that Lebanon is besieged all the way to Beirut by the Israeli navy. The air force is bombing Lebanon and Arabs are just watching. There are values and a treaty of joint defense:

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All the Arab states must participate in the defense of any state subjected to an aggression.

They said that Lebanon is the one that is the transgressor because the Fida'iyin come from Lebanon. Lebanon's territory is occupied. When Lebanon, whose southern part is occupied, works toward liberating it, it is considered as terrorist and threatens peace and is the transgressor and must be besieged. The one whose territory is occupied has no right to liberate it. Have Arabs been overwhelmed by submissiveness to the extent of letting themselves sit and watch the siege of Lebanon and the whole nation? I contacted by telephone, on your behalf, the president of Lebanon and told him: Libya's resources are at your disposal, see how you can defend Lebanon. We recognize the joint defense treaty and we implement it. (?Why not) get in touch with the Arab countries and call on them to implement the treaty. He told me: That is it, these have been struck by humiliation.

We do not accept the infiltration of the so-called Israel inside the Arab homeland and the invasion of the Arab homeland geographically, economically, and politically, and its setting up of blocks like the meeting that took place in Taba. We also will not allow NATO to stretch its hand to North Africa and our countries. We also will not accept the justifications of colonialist and hostile states, according to which we are considered terrorist when we want to liberate our territory which is occupied.

We challenge them when they challenge Islamic fundamentalism, and mix between terrorism and Islam. No. First, terrorism in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, or any other Arab country, even in Libya, is the responsibility of these countries. Neither NATO, nor any other alliance, has anything to do with this issue in the streets of Egypt, or Tunisia. We have not asked them to act as policemen in our streets. It is their intention to establish colonialism over these countries. [passage indistinct] Regrettably, the first countries they will colonize will be Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania, who opened their doors and joined NATO in this process. The last country to be colonized will be Libya, because it will resist to the last person. If they want it and occupy it, they will not find anyone, because we will resist. [passage omitted]

If they planned to colonize us, we will be very happy and glad to resist, and we will consider ourselves as being ordained for martyrdom and holy war. We are not worried. They live in anxiety, while we do not. [passage omitted]

We fight with a clean conscience and high morale. We conclude a truce with whoever wants to conclude a truce with us. Whoever dies among us will be a martyr. Our dead will be in paradise, and theirs will be in hell. Whoever survives will live free with their heads raised high. I believe that this fighting is legitimate. If one did not fight in such a battle, then in which sacred battle should he take part in?

We do not recognize what is currently happening in Lebanon. This is colonialism, and what is happening in Palestine is colonialism. We do not recognize a thing called Israel, neither do we recognize a right for NATO, nor a right for America, nor Lockerbie. All these are colonialist pretexts to humble and control this nation. We reject all of them, and we are paying the price of this rejection, because these are the things that should be rejected, as there is nothing to follow them other than submission. There is nothing after these except submission and enslavement in everything. God has not created us to surrender ourselves to the Christians. We have a right on earth, and we should live free under the sun. Accordingly, I believe that all of us, adults, young men and women are convinced, and by God ready, for martyrdom, and we enter the battle in millions. It will be a battle of martyrdom, similar to the battle to open Mecca, whereby no regular army advanced toward Mecca. It was a march on Mecca, Ta'if, and on all the positions of polytheism by all the believers. [passage omitted]

Criticizes NATO Interest in N. Africa

LD2402214395 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2048 GMT 23 Feb 95

[Speech by Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi at the opening of the 'Abd-al-Wahid al-Dukali Scientific Center in Masallatah; date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God. Dear noble brothers. We are overwhelmed with happiness on this blessed night to meet in this blessed town whose people are truly considered fighters and scholars. We meet today to announce that the 'Abd-al- Wahid al-Dukali center in Masallatah will radiate the light of learning, knowledge, and Islamic jurisprudence and authenticity once more as it used to radiate them hundreds of years ago. [passage omitted]

As you know, the Christian and Jewish alliance, and we are forced to call things by their names because this is the truth, the so- called North Atlantic Alliance [NATO], which in reality includes the Jews and the Christians, has decided to liquidate Islam, and colonize the lands of Islam, in the forefront of which are the Arabs.

They announce that the Christian NATO secretary general will tomorrow, Friday, 24th of holy Ramadan, meet the ambassadors of Islamic Arab countries to put the first steps for the advancement of this alliance in controlling the Muslim Arab North Africa. Those ambassadors are from North African countries. This flagrant challenge is coupled with the announcement of holding an aggressive naval exercise on the coast of an Arab country in North Africa, in which the Jews and Christians will take part alongside Islamic Arab countries so that the forces of this dirty alliance learn methods that will enable them to interfere. Those who are participating in it are providing the assistance by revealing their weakness and inability to repulse them. They offer this act to the enemy by participating with them in this shameful aggressive conspiracy, the exposed conspiracy.

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Due to the hideousness of this act, and to its danger on the security of the Arab nation, some Arab countries began the day before yesterday, and yesterday, to announce their disavowal from this participation. This is in the world, while the Israelis announce that no matter how much the concerned Arab countries disavow themselves and announce that they did not have a hand in this maneuver, affirm that this maneuver will actually take place with the participation of the Arab countries. [passage omitted]

At the same time, we announce that we unveil the true history, the effective history that constitutes the provisions for the confrontation. The servile Arab countries own planes, tanks, artillery, and soldiers whose number reach 1 million, but without spirit. They are psychologically defeated, without belief or creed. Masses robbed of their will; dominated and subdued masses. These masses do not provide a fighting military force. Regrettably, they are defeated masses. As for the Libyan people, who rid themselves of the means of subjugation, they enjoy high spirits. [passage omitted]

In fact, there seems to be a cultural, spiritual, and historical necessity for the restoration of these religious schools to be once more centers of radiation, because we found the Israeli and American enemies, and the Crusader enemy in general, targeting the Arab nation first, then the rest of the Islamic nations. They target them first not with the tanks and missile, but target their civilized values. They work toward destroying and defacing the Arabic language, corrupting it with Western Christian terminology, and encouraging any attempt to weaken the Arabic language. As they have done in Algeria, they encouraged hirelings who do not have a popular base, and if anyone followed them, these would be the foolish, the ignorant, and the heedless. They encouraged them to revive a language that is considered an old Arabic dialect that died 10,000 years ago, which they call the Tamazight [Berber] language. This language is of no use in this age. If we went returned to it, it would only be a blow to Pan- Arabism, Arab unity, Arab nation, the Koran, and to Islam. [passage omitted]

Heresy, which is being resurrected in the name of armed and secret groups, is colonialist inspired. The leaders of these groups are (?in the hands) of the imperialists. They are destroying Islam and Arab nationalism. Heresy is well known to us; it emerged during the Abbassid [dynasty ruled from Baghdad in the 9th century] state and now it is being revived. An Arab does not believe in heresy. There were never Arab heretics. Even when it appeared during the Abbassid regime Arabs were never heretics. No Arab belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood. [passage omitted] A non-Arab who came from outside is the one who is a heretic. This is in order to harm the Arabs and harm their nationalism, their language and religion. The real Muslim can never be a heretic and can never belong to the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim does not need a Muslim party. The Muslim does not need to be a heretic in a secret Islamic group. Heresy that raises Islamic slogans is aimed at destroying Islam. [passage omitted] Imperialism confuses fundamentalism with heresy and between terrorism and the Islamic fundamentalism. Islamic fundamentalism means Arab and Islamic traditions and it is the true religion. It is against heresy, partisanship, and against all the sins, like wine, gambling, drugs. This is fundamentalism. It means that we return to our true origin and that we get rid of all the bad things of imperialism. Imperialism wants us to err. It knows that heresy is one of the means of leading us up the wrong path. Consequently, it encourages it secretly.

America is responsible for what has been happening in Egypt, Algeria, and France. Egypt is the number one enemy to the Israelis, today, tomorrow, and until the day of judgment. Egypt is the number one enemy of Europe and America. They want to destroy this great state. They want to impose surrender on it.

Algeria is very vital and important state in the western wing of the Arab nation. They want to destroy this important corner—Algeria. America and Israel are behind the battle that is going on in Algeria and Egypt. Our brothers in Egypt and Algeria began gradually to find out this truth. Heretics are among the cheap tools of the forces that are hostile to this nation. We challenge them. We challenge imperialism and all its cheap methods. We challenge them with fundamentalism, by reviving our heritage and history, and by having pride in our values and ideals and our ability to live on our own soil and our ability to defend it and our ability to defeat the enemy. [passage omitted]

Mauritania

Algerian Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks

LD2702094795 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2300 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, president of the republic, received Algerian Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri, special envoy of President Liamine Zeroual, at the presidential palace this evening. Following the meeting, which was attended by our foreign affairs and cooperation minister, Mohamed Salem Ould Lekhel, and Abdelkrim Ben Hocine, Algerian ambassador in Nouakchott, Dembri made a statement to my colleague Baba Si Abdullah, in which he said:

[Begin Dembri recording] Please allow me, first of all, to express my happiness at being here among my brothers in Mauritania. I had the good fortune to meet with President Ould Taya, and I conveyed a letter to him from his brother Liamine Zeroual. The letter contained, on the one hand, brotherly greetings to President Ould Taya and, on the other, President Zeroual's best wishes to the Mauritanian people for further progress and prosperity.

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During this meeting, we addressed a number of questions, including those that are now issues in the Maghreb. At the same time, we benefited from the president's views on the issues of concern in the Arab-African arena and on everything related to the new international order. [end recording]

Dembri arrived in the capital this evening and was met at the airport by Mohamed Salem Ould Lekhel, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation, and Abdelkrim Ben Hocine, Algerian ambassador in Nouakchott.

Morocco

Trade Cooperation Accords Signed With Canada

LD2402143895 Rabat MAP in English 1256 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, Feb.24 (MAP)—Morocco and Canada signed here Thursday [23 February] three accords that are part of the general cooperation accord concluded in 1981, the Moroccan Ministry of Finance and Investments announced.

The financial assistance granted under the first accord, 10 million Canadian dollars will contribute to purchase Canadian-made goods and services. The second accord entitles Moroccan enterprises to have access to Canadian technology to improve their productivity and contribute to the consolidation of a good business environment.

The 3rd accord means to promote economic and technical relations between the two countries by enhancing technological exchanges in Moroccan economic key sectors and consolidating trade in general. The Canadian contribution amounts to 2.9 million cn [Canadian dollars]; ie 80 pc [percent] of the project.

The documents were initialed by Moroccan Minister of Finance and Investments Mourad Cherif, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Taeib Fassi Fihri and Canadian Ambassador to Morocco Kenneth Robert Higham.

In 1988, trade between Canada and Morocco progressed but in 1989 it slumped to stand at 1,175 million dirhams in 1993. The fluctuations are mainly due to variations of Moroccan imports of Canadian products. Moroccan imports account for 80 pc of the overall volume of bilateral exchanges.

Sudan

SSIM Rebels Claim 'Major' Government Defeat

AB2402164595 London BBC World Service in English 1515 GMT 24 Feb 95

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It is not often these days that southern Sudan rebels claim victories. If they do it is usually in holding off government advances in the new dry season offensive, and the government claims to have swept whole provinces clear of rebellion. But now Riak Machar's South Sudan Independence Movement, SSIM, says it has inflicted a major defeat on the government near the town of Malakal in Upper Nile Region. On the line to Nairobi, Barnaby Philips asked SSIM's spokesman, David Chande, what exactly they were claiming.

[Begin recording] [Chande] I am saying that our military forces have overrun the town of Doleib Hill, and this is the town where the last five international relief workers were released by the government forces last time. So we overran it and we captured some soldiers. We have prisoners of war, you know.

[Philips] What kind of a battle was this to overrun Doleib Hill?

[Chande] Well, we attacked a surprise attack. You know, we are guerrillas and we have to make some surprises sometimes.

[Philips] And did you lose any men in taking the town?

[Chande] No, not at all. More details will be coming in, but I don't think we have. I think the government lost a lot, because the town is only about 12 miles away from Malakal, south of Malakal.

[Philips] When exactly are you claiming this victory occurred?

[Chande] It occurred on the 20th and the 21st.

[Philips] So at the beginning of this week?

[Chande] Correct.

[Philips] Is this important?

[Chande] Very much so, sir. We are elated, and we congratulate the commander, Peter Manialke for what he has done, and I think we now send a signal to Khartoum that we are not going to be idle anymore.

[Philips] Have you been idle recently?

[Chande] Not at all. We have been fighting along the Sobat River Basin. We have not been idle, but I think we are going to intensify our attacks against the government forces.

[Philips] Now, there was a report on Sudanese Government radio last night that your movement, the South Sudan Independence Movement, had kicked out Riak Machar from the leadership. Is that report correct?

[Chande] Not at all, sir. I think is a fabricated story. It has been manufactured. As far as we know, Dr. Machar is still the head of the movement.

[Philips] Where is Riak Machar himself?

[Chande] He is in Europe. He is in Europe and he will be coming back soon to Nairobi.

[Philips] There is no doubt that he is in control.

[Chande] Very much so. He is in control, without doubt, sir. [end recording]

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Bahrain

Cabinet Welcomes Saudi-Yemeni Border Dispute Memo

JN2602142595 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 26 Feb (WAKH)—The Bahraini Council of Ministers held an ordinary session under Prime Minister His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin Salman Al Khalifah today. The council welcomed the Saudi-Yemeni memorandum of understanding on ways to resolve the border differences between the two countries.

The council praised the spirit of wisdom which the two sisterly countries displayed to settle the dispute between them. It hoped this step will lead to a final solution through cordial and brotherly dialogue, which represents the wisest and most ideal method for resolving pending issues and differences between brothers. It noted that such an approach supports Arab solidarity and enhances regional security and stability.

The council expressed sincere congratulations to sisterly Saudi Arabia's King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, and His Excellency Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

Kuwait

Foreign Minister: Time Not Right for Gulf Reconciliation

MM2402130095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Feb 95 p 5

[Interview with Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, by Wafa'i Diyab in Paris on 22 February]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Diyab] How do you assess your current tour, especially your talks in Paris after the numerous questions raised about the real French position on Iraq?

[Al-Sabah] My current tour is not confined to France. It also includes the Security Council member states, for two reasons: To congratulate them on their council membership, and to thank them for the positions they have taken regarding Kuwait and specifically their positions on the liberation of Kuwait. As regards France, I want to explain that there has been some misunderstanding of that position. I did not find the French position any different from the position of the other states. Perhaps there is a difference in tactics, but there is none in substance.

[Diyab] So, in general, you are satisfied with the French position?

[Al-Sabah] I am satisfied with the French position and have faith in it.

[Diyab] Do you expect the Security Council to renew the sanctions against Iraq at its next session next month?

[Al-Sabah] It is not so much a question of renewing sanctions as it is of putting pressure on Iraq to implement the Security Council resolutions. I cannot understand why some people portray the situation as if the preservation or termination of sanctions were up to Kuwait. We are not a superpower, to be able to impose our will on others. On the contrary, we too are victims. We are victims of occupation, usurpation, killing, and plunder. We do take notice of the Iraqi people and their suffering because we have suffered like them. The Iraqi people are victims of their regime, which kept food and medicine from them when it refused to sell its oil. The people are the victim. We wish the regime would implement the relevant Security Council resolutions so that it and its people could return to the international fold.

[Diyab] The Iraqi media are currently launching a major campaign against Kuwait, accusing it of contributing to the Iraqi people's starvation. What is your reaction to that?

[Al-Sabah] We thank Iraq for giving Kuwait so much weight as to allow it to decide what it likes regarding the sanctions, but before accusing others Iraq should point the finger at itself, because it has been the cause.

[Diyab] Can Kuwait coexist with the current Iraqi regime, or do security and stability begin with the prior removal of that regime?

[Al-Sabah] I do not wish to talk about removal or nonremoval of the regime. That matter concerns the Iraqi people and not us, but we do wish that that regime would end the injustice to its people by implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions.

[Diyab] There has been much talk about Arab reconciliation and about various proposed formulas for the fulfillment of that objective. Is Kuwait really interested in reconciliation?

[Al-Sabah] I will be frank with you and say that so far no specific formula has been proposed for reconciliation. I am also sorry to say what some other Arab states have been saying, namely that the time is not right for such reconciliation. Before reconciliation there should be frankness, and before that all our problems should be solved. Regrettably, our problems are still there and we have not been able to solve them yet.

[Diyab] Who should begin solving these problems or, to be more specific, on whom does the responsibility fall?

[Al-Sabah] The responsibility falls on Iraq, which destroyed the Arab world and brought it down to this level. Iraq was responsible, and the first step must come from it. It should promptly fulfill the will of the international community and begin to end the injustice inflicted on its people.

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[Diyab] What about relations with the "hostile states"? Has Kuwait taken any practical steps to improve them?

[Al-Sabah] I very much regret the use of the expression "hostile states" when talking about the states which harmed Kuwait and the Kuwaiti people during the occupation, but what happened was painful, particularly as it was against an occupied Arab country which had an important place among the Arab states. It is important that I remind you that Kuwait's relations have not been severed with any Arab state except Iraq. All our embassies remained open and operated normally. The situation has changed now, especially with the Arab Maghreb states. But Kuwait has diplomatic representation in Tunisia and Mauritania and, in the near future, will have it in Algeria.

[Diyab] Is there any trend in this connection?

[Al-Sabah] It is not so much a trend as an existing reality.

[Diyab] What about relations with the PLO? Has there been any development warranting a reconsideration of those relations?

[Al-Sabah] First of all, I want to differentiate between the PLO and the Palestinian people. The PLO did hurt Kuwait very much, and it was the side which decided to pull out. Our relations with the Palestinian people are different. We have supported them all these past years and will never abondon them. We had contributed $25 million, paid into the World Bank, to be spent on Palestinian institutions as needed. So there is a difference between the two and, as I have said, we will never abandon the Palestinian people.

[Diyab] Are there contacts of any kind with Israel?

[Al-Sabah] I assure you that there are no contacts at all with Israel. Israel has nothing to do with anything concerning Kuwait. We have lifted the second- and third-level boycott not out of love for Israel but because we need the American, Japanese, and European companies for the reconstruction of the infrastructure destroyed by Iraq. As regards the first-level boycott, we will never consider lifting that despite all the pressures, except under an Arab League decision that would be binding on everyone.

[Diyab] Kuwait is moving toward establishing strong ties with Iran at a time when the West is warning that the Iranian presence in the region is a threat to the interests of the Gulf states. Do you agree with that view?

[Al-Sabah] Kuwait's relations with Iran are strong and good. They are relations between neighbors necessitating some kind of trust between the two sides. The dispute between Iran and the United Arab Emirates [UAE] is regrettable, and we hope that it will be resolved peacefully, because if any confrontation occurs the [Gulf] Cooperation Council [GCC] states will be bound by the joint charter. Of course, we are all cooperating to resolve the dispute peacefully and without military conflict. I believe that we should learn a lesson from what happened after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. I hope that that will not be repeated.

[Diyab] What, in your view, is the best solution for the border dispute between Qatar and Bahrain?

[Al-Sabah] I wish to express my appreciation and respect for Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud for his declared willingness to mediate in that dispute. I also express my appreciation and respect to the Qatari and Bahraini officials for responding to that wish of the custodian of the two holy mosques and the peoples of the region. All we hope for is settlement of the issue through the mediation of our brothers, without recourse to courts or other states outside the framework of the GCC.

[Diyab] Kuwait is always talking about the importance of Gulf cooperation but has at the same time declined to sign the Gulf security agreement, which represents the peak of GCC states' cooperation. How do you explain that?

[Al-Sabah] The security agreement consists not of one article but of dozens of articles. If the Constitution prevents acceptance of one article, that does not mean rejection of the entire agreement. Kuwait has requested postponement of the signing because of the article which violates the constitution and for which we hope to find a solution. But that does not mean that there is no mutual security with the others. Not signing the agreement is no obstacle to cooperation.

[Diyab] Do you believe that Kuwait will later join the signatories of the agreement?

[Al-Sabah] Nothing is impossible. As I read it, the agreement is a framework for good security cooperation and is not confined to just extradition of a Kuwaiti or non-Kuwaiti national. That issue has impeded the signing of the agreement, and I hope that in time we will be able to introduce the appropriate amendment to our constitution so that we can approve and ratify it.

[Diyab] What is the nature of the relationship between the government and the National Assembly, and are there fixed rules governing that relationship?

[Al-Sabah] We believe in and practice democracy. Democracy has its positive and negative, sweet and bitter aspects, more sweet than bitter. There are no fundamental differences between the Assembly and the government but rather democratic differences over the method of work and concept of public interest.

[Diyab] The relationship, therefore, is normal and healthy.

[Al-Sabah] Our system is healthy.

[Diyab] It has been claimed that the National Assembly has disappointed many people because it has been preoccupied with peripheral issues of no public interest. Do you agree with that view?

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[Al-Sabah] That is the kind of thing that a voter would tell the deputy he elected to represent him in the Assembly, but I always wish that we would confine ourselves to issues that do not undermine our security or the public interest. There is now continuous dialogue between the government and the Assembly in search of a method that will not embarrass Kuwait in its relations with other friendly states.

[Diyab] In his speech marking the last 10 days of Ramadan the Amir, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad, notably criticized the Kuwaiti press. Does the Kuwaiti press have a real problem?

[Al-Sabah] I am one of those who have been in touch with the press for many years, and I really did not wish to see it reach this level of exchange of abuse. Kuwaiti society has always been a one-family society. When the press resorts to abuse and sinks to unacceptable levels, it must be blamed.

[Diyab] But what is the problem of the Kuwait press? Is it a professional problem, a problem of identity, or what?

[Al-Sabah] I believe it is a problem of freedom. If one's mind does not set a particular limit to freedom, it creates an abnormal situation. I believe that the press publishers should set a limit to the freedom they are enjoying now and should not allow their pages to be used for undermining Kuwaiti society or relations with other friendly states. In the final analysis it is up to the publishers, because the law has given them freedom but also asked them not to jeopardize the social system of Kuwait or offend freindly states. They have to abide by that.

[Diyab] The POW issue seems to have receded recently. Is there anything that would reassure their families that they are all right and will be returning to Kuwait soon?

[Al-Sabah] That is what we have been continually requesting. We want to know what happened to our POW's. The pressure on Iraq should continue until it implements the Security Council resolutions, including the resolution about release of the POW's. We want to know if they are alive or dead. We want to know where they are and what happened to them. That is the least we want. Iraq should allow the Red Cross into Baghdad to search for them without any prior conditions. I do not believe that can be achieved without continuous pressure from the Security Council.

[Diyab] To what extent have Kuwait's political and military events affected the economic situation, and is Kuwait really facing a stifling crisis?

[Al-Sabah] There is no crisis calling for real concern. Some crises have come and gone. What Kuwait went through was not easy at all. It spent a year under occupation, and its oil wells were in flames for another year, and it spent a third year repairing the burnt wells. That directly affected the economy, but I have no fears about the current situation, and I believe that in two or three years at the most we will be able to restore our economy to what it was and even make it better. True, there is a budget deficit at present, but that will not last long.

[Diyab] How do you assess Kuwaiti-Saudi relations?

[Al-Sabah] Kuwaiti-Saudi relations were special even before the Iraqi occupation, and that applies to the governments and peoples. I beseech God to keep them that way. Our fate and the fate of Saudi Arabia are ultimately one and the same.

[Diyab] In a few days Kuwait will be celebrating the fourth anniversary of liberation. Do you feel that Kuwait has passed the danger point and is now safe, or is there still a threat?

[Al-Sabah] I would like to say that it has passed the danger point, and by that I mean not only internal danger but also external danger. Obviously, after what happened in August 1990 and in October last year we must always be cautious. My view is that, even if the security situation is 95-percent stable, we must always be cautious and must always keep that in mind.

Foreign Minister Rejects PLO Call for Arab Summit

NC2602185495 Paris AFP in English 1822 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Feb 26 (AFP)—Kuwait on Sunday [26 February] rejected a call by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for an Arab summit, saying it was up to the Palestinians to salvage the peace process with Israel.

"I ask myself why they (the Palestinians) did not inform Arab countries when they reached peace with Israel," said Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad in an interview with the Arabic daily AL-HAYAH.

He said the PLO called the summit "now that the situation has deteriorated" with the Jewish state, adding that the problem was "the responsibility of the PLO leaders."

The PLO's top body, the executive committee, made its call last Wednesday following a crisis meeting to review its stalled autonomy negotiations with Israel.

Israel charges PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat with not doing enough to check anti-Israeli attacks while the PLO accuses the Jewish state of delaying the spread of self-rule to the West Bank.

Kuwait would not veto an Arab summit but "believes that it is not yet the right time and that the ground is not ready for such a summit," Shaykh Sabah said.

Libya too rejected the PLO call as an attempt to cover up for the failure of the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy accord, which launched limited self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho last May.

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The Kuwaiti foreign minister also told AL-HAYAH, which is published in several Arab capitals, that his country was under pressure to lift the direct Arab boycott of Israel, without identifying the source of the pressure.

He said Kuwait, along with other Gulf Arab monarchies, lifted the indirect boycott of firms doing business with Israel last September because "our country has ties with American, Japanese and British firms."

"But the direct boycott will only be lifted following a decision by the Arab League," he said.

Oman

Sultan Qabus Receives Albright, Clinton Letter

JN2502143395 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Said has received a letter from His Excellency U.S. President Bill Clinton that deals with the current situation in the region and developments in the Arab and international arenas. His majesty the sultan received the letter during his meeting with Madeleine Albright, U.S. representative at the United Nations and the U.S. President's envoy. The U.S. official explained to his majesty the sultan the United States' view on regional and international issues.

The meeting was attended by His Highness Haytham Bin-Tariq Al Sa'id, the Foreign Ministry's secretary general; and David Dunford, U.S. ambassador to the Sultanate.

'Informed Sources' Cited on Talks

JN2702141295 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1100 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 27 Feb (INA)—Informed sources in Muscat have said that the talks held between Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman and U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright on the Iraq sanctions were based on firm Omani convictions regarding the need to alleviate the sufferings of the Iraqi people and take serious steps toward that end.

The sources said the Omani position on the sanctions at the UN Security Council will be determined on this basis, and also on the basis of drawing up a clear international agenda outlining Iraq's obligations. They added that Sultan Qabus underscored international cooperation with Iraq on the basis of a clear international agenda that does not lend itself to various interpretations and to the attachment of further conditions from time to time.

The sources indicated that in this regard, Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id underlined to the U.S. ambassador the importance of spelling out the areas in which Iraq has to demonstrate compliance and announcing this clearly in a manner that does not lend itself to various interpretations. Similarly, he underscored the importance of identifying the areas in which Iraq has demonstrated compliance.

Oman believes that such a public identification of Iraq's responsibilities and commitments and Iraq's awareness of its duties and rights will prevent the sanctions issue or the issue of taking Iraq to task from becoming an open-end book.

Concerning international cooperation with Iraq, the sources said that Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id emphasized the importance of differentiating between the matters concerning the world community and those concerning Iraqi domestic matters—which may be of interest to the world community but which, in the end, remain purely Iraqi business, in line with the norms that are applied in several similar cases in the world.

Oman also stressed that setting such bases—represented in the need to ease the suffering of the Iraqi people and set a clear timetable for Iraq's commitments without later attaching any further demands, and also to specify the issues that concern the Iraqi people—is essential to providing a fair way to deal with this issue. The aim is not to achieve certain objectives or designs for a certain party. These bases will also lead in the future to easing the Iraqi people's and will allow them to resume their normal life and march.

The sources clearly stressed that it will be within the context of this argument, and on its basis, that Oman will determine its position in the UN Security Council on whether or not to support the continuation of the sanctions against Iraq, which is the objective of U.S. Envoy Madeleine Albright's current tour.

It is worth mentioning that U.S. Envoy Madeleine Albright announced in Muscat after meeting Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id that Oman's position is identical to that of the U.S. Administration on the need to maintain the embargo imposed on Iraq. This prompted the official quarters in Muscat to clarify the Omani position, which is different from that which Ambassador Albright announced to journalists yesterday.

Saudi Arabia

Memorandum of Understanding Signed With Yemen

LD2602012295 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 0010 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A memorandum of understanding between the governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen was signed this evening at the palace of HRH Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, defense minister and inspector general in Mecca, in the presence of HRH Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz,the head of the Yemeni negotiating delegation, the [Yemeni] speaker of the Council of Deputies, Shaykh 'Abdallah al- Ahmar, and members of the two delegations.

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The session started with an address by HRH Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, in which he said:

[Begin Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We open this good session in Holy Mecca, close to God's Noble House, and with brothers with whom we are linked by faith, fraternity, and neighborliness.

The Yemeni-Saudi ties are stronger than anyone who may wish to disturb or affect them. The past meetings—some people would say that they went on for long—indicate the depth of the brotherly relations and the seeking and aspiring by the two sides for amity, organization, and the avoidance of any future problems.

In this place, and on behalf of the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, his crown prince, and the government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and on behalf of my colleagues who have done their duty and struggled to serve Yemen, before turning their eyes to serve Saudi Arabia.

I greet and welcome my brother and colleague Shaykh 'Abdallah al- Ahmar, who is known to everyone of his service to his religion, and then to his homeland and to our Arab nation; and my brothers and colleagues the ministers and the Yemeni ambassador, my colleagues the foreign ministers and all the colleague who struggled and made efforts so that we could reach this stage of no victor and no vanquished.

This is for one reason: we are one state and one people. If there had been any suspicion between us at any time in the past, we consider it to have passed like a cloud in summer. From this day on, amity, brotherliness, and cooperation will begin, because we know that we have a long path before us. There is a long way to go for the committees and the experts. These experts from the two sides must act with wisdom, amity, and brotherliness, and not with arrogance, with everyone wanting to appear a hero to his country. On the contrary, the true hero is the man who behaves rationally, carries out his work well and loves his country.

I am only saying this because of the feeling I got from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the crown prince, the government and people of Saudi Arabia, and those colleagues who performed this great task, led by Prince Nayif, Ibrahim al-Anqari, Dr. 'Abd al- 'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, and all our brothers—that this is truely a new beginning.

Once again, I welcome you again and wish everyone success in what we have just achieved. How great is the good fortune that it should be on the 27th night of Ramadan, the night of al-Qadr, on which the revelation of the Koran was completed. How fitting it is that we should follow the Koran and learn from it. [end recording]

Then 'Abdallah al-Ahmar [speaker of the Yemeni Council of Deputies] made a speech in which he said:

[Begin recording] [al-Ahmar] This is a valuable auspicious moment on the blessed 27th night of Ramadan, the night of al-Qadr, that has brought us together on this day to sign the agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Yemen. With this document we will end a period during which relations between Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were somewhat lukewarm.

As Prince Sultan said, this was a summer cloud that has dissolved, by the grace of God, on this night of al-Qadr in this holy place near the Ka'bah. God willing, the steps that follow this one will be swift, successful, and sincere, and will make up for the cooperation between the two countries that was lost in the past period, which we consider to have ended tonight.

On behalf of the president of the republic, the Yemeni Government, and my colleagues in the Yemeni delegation, I thank the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, may God preserve him, his heir apparent, Prince Sultan, and all the officials and members of the Saudi delegation for their hospitality and care that this hospitable country has extended; but this is not strange because it is our country.

I would also like to thank Prince Sultan for the efforts he has exerted in arriving at what we have achieved, and we hope that the points on which we have agreed will be the beginning of benefits for the two peoples, countries, and states of Saudi Arabia and Yemen. As is well known, Yemen and Saudi Arabia are one people because of the brotherly ties and bonds binding them. This is known to everyone. We hope that these ties, bonds, and solidarity between the two countries will develop and grow more and more, and that sincere cooperation will prevail in the coming stage to serve the two countries, God willing. Peace be upon you and thank you. [end recording]

After that the memorandum of understanding was signed for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by Ibrahim 'Abdallah al-'Anqari, special adviser to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and for the Yemeni side by 'Abd-al-Qadir 'Abd-al-Rahman Bajammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development.

Text of Memorandum of Understanding

LD2602033195 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0148 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Mecca, 25 Feb [date as received]—[passage omitted] After that, the memorandum of understanding was signed by Ibrahim 'Abdallah al-'Anqari, the special adviser to the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and 'Abd-al-Qadir 'Abd-al-Rahman Bajammal, the deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development, on behalf of Yemen. Then, the memorandum was read:

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. A memorandum of understanding between the governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen.

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Out of their desire to firmly entrench and bolster the ties of brotherly relations between the Kingdom and Yemen, the two sides have agreed on the following:

Clause 1: The two sides affirm their commitment to the legitimacy and binding nature of the al-Ta'if accord signed on 6 Safar 1353 AH, corresponding to 20 May 1934, its appendices; known as the al-Ta'if Accord, which will be referred to hereafter as the Accord.

Clause 2: A joint committee will be set up, composed of an equal number from each side within a period of 30 days. Its task will be to reestablish the border]signs in accordance with the border reports appended to the Accord—those still existing and those which have fallen down—starting from the border point "Rasif al- Bahr, Tamama Ra's al-Mi'wajj Shami li manfadh Radif Qarad" [punctuation as received] between Maydi and (al-Mu'sim) [most likely al-Muwassam], to the last point previously demarcated in (Jabal al-Thar). Modern scientific methods are to be used to establish the signs by agreeing with a specialist company, to be selected by the two sides, to execute the task. The company will carry out its task under the supervision of the committee.

Clause 3: The current committee formed by the two countries will continue its work to decide on the required measures and the steps that would lead to demarcate the remaining parts of the border, starting from (Jabal al-Thar) to the end of the two countries' border, including agreement on means of arbitration in the event of differences between the two countries.

Clause 4: A joint committee will be formed which will negotiate on determining the sea border in accordance with international law, starting from the border point on the Red Sea coast mentioned in Clause 2 above.

Clause 5: A high-level military committee will be formed by the two sides to ensure the prevention of military incidents, movements, or other things on the border between the two countries.

Clause 6: A joint ministerial committee will be formed to develop economic, trade, and cultural relations between the two countries, and to boost aspects of cooperation between them. This committee will start its work within thirty days from the date of signing this memorandum.

Clause 7: A joint higher committee will be appointed to work on realizing the aforementioned, facilitate the tasks of the aforementioned committees and remove any obstacles or difficulties that may obstruct their work.

Clause 8: Each of the two countries affirm their commitment not to allow either to be used as a base and a center for aggression on the other, or for carrying out political, military, or information activity against the other.

Clause 9: In order to continue the maintenance of an amicable and appropriate climate to ensure the success of the talks, each side will undertake not to carry out any propaganda against the other.

Clause 10: There is nothing in this memorandum that includes an amendment to the al-Ta'if Accord or its appendices, including the border reports.

Clause 11: Everything that is discussed by the aforementioned committees will be checked and recorded in minutes which will be signed by officials from both sides.

This memorandum was signed in Mecca on Sunday, 27 Ramadan 1415 AH, corresponding to 26 February 1995. It will come into effect on the date of exchanging the ratification documents.

[Signed] For the government of the Republic of Yemen: 'Abd-al- Qadir 'Abd-al-Rahman Bajammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development;

For the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Ibrahim Bin- 'Abdallah al-'Anqari, Personal adviser to the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques.

After that, HRH Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar replied to journalists' questions.

Then, the session ended and gifts were exchanged; HRH Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz presented gifts to members of the Yemeni delegation.

Defense Minister Holds News Conference

LD2602111895 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0435 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mecca, 26 Feb (SPA)—Following the signing of the Saudi-Yemeni memorandum of understanding last night in Mecca, Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense, and aviation and inspector general, answered questions by the press.

In reply to a question about the three points about which Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih talked a few days ago, His Royal Highness [HRH] said:

I would like to thank the questioner, but first of all there is no explosive situation. All that exists is noise between the two sides. His Excellency the Yemeni president always talks amicably and as a responsible leader who hints to his people about subjects that are not mentioned by the press. Therefore we assure you that arbitration is the final resort. We are doing that to reassure our peoples and to reassure the world that we do not support dictatorship or hegemony.

What we agreed to will be implemented. As for what we did not agree to, then there will be the arbitration that God specified in his Holy Book.

In reply to a question about the reflections of the agreement on the situation of the Yemeni citizens, HRH said:

I would like to assure you that we have now half a million Yemenis who are working hard and in a fraternal and amicable way and we can never treat the Yemenis less than any other Arabs.

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In reply to a question about the signing of the final agreement, HRH said:

As you know, the issue is not an issue of one or two days. There are long and wide borders that extend for more than 2,000 km. There are committees specified and detailed in the memorandum of understanding. Committees on both sides will be formed to specify everything in the field. When these committees finish their work in six months or a year, everything will be signed by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

In reply to a question about cooperation with Yemen, Prince Sultan said:

Saudi Arabia has not stopped cooperating with our brothers in Yemen. As you know, Saudi Arabia is a part of the Arab nation and its revenues are not for itself alone as it does its best to cooperate with all our Arab brothers, particularly Yemen.

In reply to a question about whether a time table has been agreed for completing the work of the committees, HRH Prince Sultan Bin- 'Abd-al-'Aziz said:

As you know, the beginning has been agreed. To finish we have set a ceiling in spite of the existence of arbitration organs [as received]. We left the time open to let fraternity, amicability, and rationalism take their course. It could end in six months or one year. The important thing is that it is a big job for which amicable brothers are working.

About whether there are measures to follow the memorandum of understanding, HRH said:

First of all we consider it as a summer cloud that has now passed. Now we are under the winter rain and God willing the spring will come. The presence of the ambassador now, whose credentials will be accredited after the Id, is the first step toward normalization. The exchange of visits between all officials is expected. When can normalization or development happen? The normalization happens between a foreign and non-foreign country or if a severance of relations happens, but we have not severed our relations.

There are ambassadors, exchanges, visits, Yemeni workers, and joint trade, but now we want to extend these as far as possible.

On the question of whether any former documents recognized by the two countries had been included in this memorandum of agreement, his highness said:

This means preempting the committees that are working now. This is the work of the committees and not our work.

In reply to a question on whether the setting up of a number of committees represented a temporary solution, HRH Prince Sultan said:

There are committees from among us and experts from among us and problems that are not simple. But as long as we are convinced that there is not a problem that we cannot solve, there is no problem—we are one country and one people. The large number of committees does not mean that there are differences. On the contrary, it means that the tasks and prerogatives of all the bodies will be facilitated.

A question was put to Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar saying that since during the period when the Yemeni-Saudi talks were being held these talks had been subjected to distortions by some sides; to what extent did the Yemeni Government guarantee that the memorandum of agreement would not suffer the same distortions as the talks did? Shaykh al-Ahmar replied that regarding this, the proverb says: there are those who hate the rain and those who love it. Everyone loves the rain but at the same time there are those who loathe it. Anyone who distorts or talks about a procession that is under way will not affect it.

Then a question was put to HRH Prince Sultan on the holding of a summit soon between Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin- 'Abd-al-'Aziz and the Yemeni president. His highness replied saying: Actually it would be going too far to talk about this subject, which is particular to the heads of state themselves. We must recognize the extent of our responsibilities. Anyway, what has been read and discussed is sufficient. We consider the men of the press to be our right hand in this issue, whether in the kingdom, in fraternal Yemen, in Arab countries, or all the foreign media, because if they help us to investigate the facts and to avoid exaggerations we will reach a better solution.

Interior Minister: Strong Ties 'Normal'

LD2602133095 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1143 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mecca, 26 Feb—His Royal Highness [HRH] Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-'al-'Aziz, the interior minister, has affirmed that strong relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the fraternal Republic of Yemen is the normal thing.

In press statements following the signing by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen in Mecca last evening of a memorandum of understanding, he said the natural thing is that our relations with fraternal Yemen be strong, because they are for the good of both countries and, as facts show, Saudi Arabia cannot but work for the good of the Yemeni people, just as it is its duty to work for the Saudi people. Describing his feelings on this occasion, the interior minister said it was the feeling of a citizen wanting good for his country.

To a question on ad-hoc committees starting work, given that the Interior Ministry is the department concerned with borders, Prince Nayif said the demarcation of borders would be the task of the committees charged with this issue. Our task as the interior ministers of the

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two countries, he said, was to ensure security and stability at the borders and normalize the situation so that it may be consistent with the spirit of the memorandum of understanding.

To a question on the fact that there was no mention of removing the troop concentrations at the borders, all the more since news agencies still mention the persistence of these concentrations, the interior minister said the spirit of the memorandum and what had been agreed upon did say that this situation should come to an end, if it existed at all.

Prince Nayif answered another question noting that the situation at the border is now secure and stable but whether the situation in the al-Kharkhir region was settled definitively, he said that nothing happened recently and that it was hoped that the situation would revert to what it was a few months ago when the security situation at the borders was excellent.

The interior minister added: "Even at the time when, regrettably, there were no channels or contacts between the two countries, the security issues between us and Yemen were normal. Now we hope that these issues will be better than before."

In reply to a question about a statement from some Yemeni Ulama in which they had put the responsibility for this tension on the shoulders of Saudi Arabia and called on the Yemeni Government to adopt stringent measures at the negotiations, HRH said: "By God I have not heard that. But in fact this does not tally with reality. We have not pursued or done anything that could have led to tension with our brothers in Yemen. This is well known to the Yemeni Interior Ministry and to the brothers responsible for the borders in both countries."

In reply to a question about the existence of Saudi prisoners of war in Yemen and the pending issues related to that and whether they were investigated in a final way, the interior minister emphasized that there were no prisoners of war. He said: "In fact I do not know that there are prisoners of war, but naturally there are joint tribes at the borders, particularly in the region from Thar mountain to the Sea and also from Thar mountain to the north or to the southeast. These tribes could move as they did in the past and hence put an end to the problems through those responsible for the borders without referring to the concerned authorities, and we hope this is what is going to happen. The problem of the tribes should be solved locally without referring to the central government."

In his reply to a question about what happened in the issue of separating northern Yemen from southern Yemen, HRH Prince Nayif said: "We consider that there is a Yemeni Republic with which we deal in this respect."

On a question on whether the incidents and skirmishes on the borders were individual incidents and not from official circles, HRH pointed out: "From our side there was nothing. As for the second part of the question, I think that not replying is better than replying."

Yemen's Salih, Others Congratulate King

LD2702124995 Riyadh SPA in English 1214 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mecca Feb 27, SPA—Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz received a telephone call last night from the Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

During the telephone conversation, the two leaders exchanged congratulations on the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Yemen in Mecca a night before amid a 'cordial atmosphere and unwavering will to maintain peace and stability and observe good neighbourly bonds.'

The two leaders also reviewed the bilateral relations and all matters that might serve the best interest of the two brotherly people.

King Fahd also received a telephone call from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad who greeted the Saudi monarch on the occasion of the blessed last ten days of Ramadan.

He also congratulated King Fahd on the occasion of the conclusion of the memorandum of understanding between the kingdom and Yemen and wished the two countries constant security and stability.

For his part, King Fahd thanked President Asad for his noble and brotherly feelings and expressed the best wishes to the Syrian leadership and people.

Meanwhile, King Fahd contacted on telephone, Shaykh Jabir al- Ahmad al-Sabah, the emir of Kuwait in which he expressed the heartfelt compliments and good wishes to the Kuwaiti leadership and people on the occasion of the national day.

King Fahd also received a telephone call from Shaykh Isa Bin- Salman al Khalifa, the emir of Bahrain, who congratulated the Saudi monarch on the signature of the memorandum of understanding between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

The Saudi king thanked Shaykh Isa for his brotherly feelings and expressed his best wishes to the Bahraini people.

Yemeni Speaker Departs

LD2702145495 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1344 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 27 Feb—Shaykh 'Abdallah al- Ahmar, head of the Yemeni negotiating delegation and speaker of the House of Deputies, left Jeddah this afternoon with his delegation.

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They were seen off at King 'Abd al-'Aziz international airport by Ibrahim al-'Anqari, personal adviser to the custodian of the two holy mosques; 'Abd al-Rahman Mansuri, Foreign Ministry undersecretary for political affairs; 'Ali al-Qufaydi, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's ambassador in Sanaa; Muhammad Nazir, director of royal protocol in Jeddah; and a number of other officials.

Syrian Foreign Minister Leaves Jeddah After Visit

LD2402133895 Riyadh SPA in English 1225 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, Feb 24, SPA—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar left Jeddah last night following a brief visit to the kingdom.

He was seen off at the airport by minister of state and cabinet member Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud.

Yemen

Reaction to Accord With Saudi Arabia Reported

Salih, Fahd Give Blessings to Accord

JN2602203595 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A telephone conversation was held this evening between brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the republic, and his brother Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd- al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques. They exchanged congratulations on the end of the blessed month of Ramadan and the advent of 'Id al-Fitr.

The two leaders gave their blessings to the memorandum of understanding between the two sisterly and neighborly countries reached by the two countries' negotiating delegations. They also discussed a number of issues related to the fraternal bilateral relations and ways to develop and strengthen them to serve the interests of the two fraternal peoples and to reinforce regional security, stability, and peace.

Salih Hopes Accord Will Be 'Emulated'

JN2702142995 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has stressed that the memorandum of understanding signed by our country and Saudi Arabia is an example that should be emulated in order to resolve inter-Arab differences and that it came as a result of good Arab efforts and mediations.

In a telephone interview with MBC television, the president said: We are pleased with what was achieved by the delegations of the two sisterly states the day before yesterday [25 February] near God's house at Mecca's Grand Mosque. This step constitutes a new beginning for Yemeni-Saudi relations, which have experienced some problems in the past few months and years.

Asked about the future of Yemeni-Saudi relations, the president said: We consider the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the two countries a new beginning for the brotherly ties. There is a common understanding between the leaders and peoples of the two countries. It is in the interest of both parties to have good neighborly relations and understanding for the benefit of the two sisterly countries.

The brother president said he hopes what has been achieved can be emulated to resolve the inter-Arab border disputes. He noted that our country had previously taken the initiative to resolve the border problem with the Sultanate of Oman, and, God willing the border issues can be resolved in a friendly, brotherly way without any party feeling vanquished or victor. He stressed that the two parties have now displayed good intentions.

Bahraini, Syrian Leaders Congratulate Salih

JN2702143395 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih last night received a telephone call from his brother, His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of Bahrain. They exchanged congratulations on the approaching end of holy Ramadan and 'Id al-Fitr.

Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman congratulated his brother the president for the signing of the memorandum of understanding between our country and fraternal Saudi Arabia. He noted that this was an advanced step that translates the aspirations and hopes of the region's people in cooperation, security, stability, and peace.

The brother president thanked his brother the Bahraini amir. He wished the brotherly ties between the two countries continued prosperity and progress.

Brother President Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih received another phone call yesterday from his brother Syrian President Hafiz al- Asad. They exchanged congratulations on the approaching end of holy Ramadan and 'Id al-Fitr.

The Syrian president congratulated his brother the president for the signing of the memorandum of understanding between our country and fraternal Saudi Arabia. He said the agreement is an important gain, not only for the two fraternal countries, but also for the Arab nation and joint pan-Arab action.

The brother president expressed to his brother President Hafiz al-Asad our country's appreciation for the principled pan-Arab stands of our brothers in Syria and for the sincere brotherly efforts they exerted to bring closer the various views and to arrive at what has been achieved between our country and Saudi Arabia. He noted that

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what has been achieved is the fruit of the good Syrian efforts. He said there are now sincere intentions to resolve all the problems through brotherly dialogue and understanding for the benefit of the two sisterly, neighboring states and the Arab nation.

Delegate Welcomes Understanding With Saudis

MM2702084095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 27 Feb 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Wahib Muhammad Ghurab: "In Statement To AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister Rules Out Arbitration"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jeddah—The committee entrusted with discussing border questions between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, whose meetings concluded the day before yesterday with the announcement of a memorandum of understanding between the two countries, will hold a meeting in the second half of March.

'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jammal, deputy prime minister, planning minister, and member of the Yemeni delegation, has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the negotiating committee will discuss at its meeting drawing up specific procedures for work in order to handle matters directly and practically. [passage omitted]

The Yemeni official pointed out that the memorandum of understanding signed by the two sides represents a starting point for the future and a real gateway for Yemeni-Saudi relations. "And we have opened more than one window in it to renew the air in relations between the two countries," as he put it.

Asked about the difficulties facing the negotiations and the committee's work, Ba-Jammal stressed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that there are two main conditions for the next stage's success: sincere intentions and political will. "If they are available—and I believe they are—we will succeed." [passage omitted]

Asked about the way the two sides tackled the points that prevented an early conclusion of the negotiations, such as the issues of normalization and arbitration, Ba-Jammal said: The arbitration question has been resolved by the stipulations of Article III of the memorandum of understanding, namely that we begin to discuss the procedures directly, instead of entering that labyrinth of debate. [passage omitted]

Ba-Jammal went on to say: "I personally believe that border issues cannot be resolved purely through the law or through one rigid law. No border issues can be resolved without political means. Politics tends to have a stronger impact in bilateral border talks than the law."

On the possibility of a Yemeni-Saudi summit being held, Ba-Jammal said: "I see no problem at all with regard to the meeting, which could take place at any moment, because the issue is now bigger than all of us in terms of relations between the two countries." [passage omitted]

Radio Hails Accord With Saudi Arabia

JN2602135595 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1145 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Unattributed commentary; from the "Issues and Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is natural to say that our citizens received with satisfaction the news of the signing of the Accord of Understanding between our country and fraternal Saudi Arabia. They also received with satisfaction the speech of Brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar and his brother Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud and the warm brotherly words they exchanged which reflect the deep historic ties between the two Arab, Muslim peoples in the two neighboring countries—the Republic of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The way to resolve the various issues related to borders between our country and Saudi Arabia after the signing of the Accord of Understanding is now clear. The current committee established by the two countries, as stipulated by Article Three of the Accord of Understanding, will continue its work to take the necessary measures and steps to delineate the remaining borderlines, starting from Thar Mountain to the end of the two countries' borderlines, and agree on the means for arbitration in the case of any differences between the two countries.

In order to ensure that the work of the joint committee can progress smoothly, a joint high-level committee will be set up by the two parties to prevent any new redeployments or moves, be they military or otherwise, on the borders between the two countries. The committee's work will provide a safety valve. Furthermore, the committee's work will undoubtedly prevent the emergence or development of any event that may disturb the atmosphere.

The tasks of the joint military committee, as stipulated by the Accord of Understanding, are considered very important. Equally, the establishment of a joint ministerial committee to improve economic, commercial, and cultural ties between the two countries and strengthen cooperation between them will enhance confidence that the two countries are sincerely keen on proceeding ahead in the direction of resolving border problems and cooperating, in a sincere spirit of brotherhood, in the various fields to realize the common interests and cooperate extensively in the commercial, economic, cultural, and other fields.

We consider the Accord of Understanding a realistic beginning to resolving the border issues between our country and Saudi Arabia. We at the same time, value highly the efforts that have been exerted to achieve the realistic formula of the Accord of Understanding which, it is certain, can be implemented in a very short period of time and without any ambiguity.

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Naturally, the implementation of the provisions of the Accord of Understanding will provide a solution to the border problems in a way that can satisfy the two countries. The formation of a military committee from the two sides to ensure that no military or other moves or preparations are made on the borders between the two countries, and the formation of a joint ministerial committee to improve the commercial, economic, and cultural ties between the two countries and strengthen cooperation, will open the doors wide open for the sincere and constructive efforts that aim to resolve all border problems.

Very briefly, the Accord of Understanding constitutes a very important step on the path of resolving the border problems between our country and Saudi Arabia. It also provides the opportunity to work on improving brotherly ties and strengthen cooperation in various economic, commercial, and cultural fields to develop the mutual interests of the two fraternal peoples in Yemen and Saudi Arabia who, throughout a history that dates back to thousands of years, have always been united in religion, language, traditions, interests, and fate.

Therefore, the Accord of Understanding was the step that had to be taken to resolve the border problems between the two countries on the one hand, and to restore ties between Yemen and Saudi Arabia to normal, on the other.

From God we seek guidance and success.

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Reportage on Fighting Between Kurdish Groups

PUK-KDP 'Ferocious Battles' Continue

NC2502111595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0930 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to reports from the autonomous area in north Iraq, ferocious battles are raging between the armed men of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], led by Jalal Talabani, and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], led by Mas'ud Barzani. These reports note that bloody battles were fought in the areas of Banjwin, Kasrawan [name as received], and Safin Dagh on the outskirts of Irbil between the two groups in the past few hours and that the casualties among Talabani's group were very high. These reports say that Barzani's men are currently preparing to advance on Irbil, which is still controlled by Talabani's gunmen. According to these reports, the Barzani-led forces are surrounding Irbil, while sporadic clashes involving the use of medium- and small-caliber weapons are taking place in other areas near the city.

According to the latest reports, the situation in north Iraq is worsening and deteriorating as fighting continues, and the cities are encountering acute food shortages and disappearing services as well as power and water cuts, particularly in Irbil and its suburbs. [passage omitted]

More on Fighting in North

NC2602105395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1014 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (MENA)—According to morning reports from the autonomous region in northern Iraq, fierce clashes are continuing between gunmen of Mas'ud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK].

The KDP radio, Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan, monitored here in Baghdad, reported that during the past few hours the fighting centered around Irbil and the Banjwin area near the Iraqi-Iranian border.

The radio said that Barzani's forces killed many and wounded a large number of the Talabani forces but it did not give precise casualty figures.

The radio said that Barzani's forces are now in control of the strategic town of Dinah Kansazan [placename as received] in northern Iraq and are besieging Irbil.

Travelers from northern Iraq say that fighting was still continuing this morning and that dozens of Kurdish gunmen were killed in various sporadic clashes.

The Talabani group controls the Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah areas while the Dahuk region on the Turkish border and others areas adjacent to the Iranian border are under Barzani's control. This allows Barzani to monopolize the collection of all customs revenues. That was the issue that caused the dispute to erupt between the main two Kurdish parties in December 1994.

PUK Spokesman: 67 Kurds Dead in 4 Days

NC2502125195 Paris AFP in English 1122 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Feb 25 (AFP)—At least 67 people have died in four days of bitter fighting between rival Kurds in northern Iraq, a leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) said Saturday [25 February].

The bloodiest day came on Tuesday when fighting for control of Kaznazan, 25 kilometres (15 miles) east of Irbil, "left 26 PUK supporters dead and 41 in the rival ranks of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)," Muhammad Isma'il told AFP.

Contacted by telephone, he told AFP in Cyprus that KDP members were also thought to have died in "an ambush on Thursday close to Rawanduz," 80 kilometres (50 miles) northeast of Irbil and held by the PUK.

There were other clashes at the beginning of the week in Shuman, Hajj 'Umran and al-Qusayr further east and on Friday in Panjwin, close to the border with Iran. But Isma'il, a PUK representative in Europe, could not give any casualty figures.

The PUK led by Jalal Talabani and its rival KDP led by Mas'ud Barzani are locked in a bitter power struggle in northern Iraq which has been under Kurdish control in defiance of Baghdad since the end of the 1991 Gulf War.

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has offered to mediate in the conflict, but Isma'il said the "Kurd parties continue to refuse all proposals from the (Iraqi) regime."

The PUK controls the areas of Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah while the KDP runs a strip along the frontier with Iran and the region of Dahuk bordering Turkey.

Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Ferhat Ataman said Wednesday that about 100 people had died last week in fighting between rival Kurdish groups in northern Iraq.

KDP Said Advancing on PUK Strongholds

NC2602122495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1158 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (MENA)—The Voice of Kurdistan radio, mouthpiece of the [Mas'ud Barzani's] Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], has reported that an armed KDP patrol has succeeded in penetrating fortified positions belonging to Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] in the Qillat Gulan [placename as received], Talabani's place of residence, east of al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate.

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The Kurdish radio, which was monitored in Baghdad today, did not give further details about this development but observers saw it as a new indication that Barzani's forces were advancing on the PUK's major strongholds.

PUK Radio Details Clashes

NC2602164095 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Words indistinct] on the night of 25-26 February launched a sweeping attack on the artillery positions of the capitulationist family [Mas'ud Barzani] in the (Kuwawa) area and forced the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] mercenaries to retreat. Another heroic force from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] peshmergas launched a simultaneous attack on the Barzani family's mercenaries in the areas of Charmagah and al-Shaykh Hasan and purged the Charmagah mountain range up to the (Chilakhanuza) Heights of the mercenaries, who left their personal belongings behind.

A group of KDP mercenaries attacked the (Qasbat Shaykhan) in (Hawd Suran) with the aim of arresting the PUK members and supporters but the youth firmly confronted the Barzani gang and forced it to retreat and flee, leaving behind six wounded and several dead bodies to the vultures on the battlefield.

To avenge this shameful defeat, the KDP mercenaries killed citizens Nur-al-Din Muhammad Wassu and Rashid Thabir after detaining them in the area. They dumped their bodies in (Bab al-Qandil).

The KDP mercenaries in the area of (Bahdidan), which is suffering the Barzani family's repression and terrorism, are continuing their terrorist and heinous acts against civilians by detaining them and stealing their personal belongings. An informed source said that prisoners in Dahuk Governorate's main prison broke down the prison gates and fled. It added that the prison guards opened fire and killed several of them. The source also told the daily paper KURDISTAN NWAY that the KDP thugs are continuing to arrest the PUK supporters and members and recently arrested Hasan Ni'mat, Siddiq 'Ali, Bahjat 'Ali, 'Ali Adam, 'Awni Nairawi, and Mirza Hasan, a student at Dahud University's College of Medicine. The mercenaries looted the houses of citizens Amin Baba Shaykh, 'Amid Khalil, and Jamal Yusuf.

The capitulationist KDP leadership's artillery last night shelled the (Balaslawa) residential complex in Irbil Governorate and Qasabat Hasarak. The barbaric shelling wounded six civilians in (Balaslawa) and caused heavy damage to the citizens' houses and possessions. The Barzani family's artillery also fired shells on the Irbil-(Qawsinjaq) road near the Rizgari Hospital but caused no civilian casualties or damage.

Regime Said Staging 'Unusual Military Movements'

NC2602164495 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports from the Kifri area say the Ba'thist regime has staged unusual military movements in the area in the past two days. A source said that a force supported by tanks arrived at the outskirts of the town of Kifri. It added that 18 tanks are now deployed in the village of al-Qahirah and that the other tanks were sent to Karkuk. A force of 200 paratroopers was deployed in the areas of Jabbarah and (Tahriz).

A fascist regime soldier yesterday fired on a group of children near Kifri, killing student Ashna Jamil Muhammad, 15, from Kifri.

Islamic Resistance Claims To Kill Intelligence Officers

NC2602154095 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A group belonging to the Islamic Resistance forces attacked and killed Intelligence Captain Ahmad al- Samurra'i instantly in Baghdad after conducting thorough surveillance and once his criminal role in assassinating and kidnapping citizens was verified.

Our sources in Baghdad add that Saddam's intelligence apparatus has put personnel on alert and directed senior officers to change their residence for fear of attacks by the Islamic Resistance groups.

Our sources in Karkuk report that the heroes of the Islamic Resistance attacked and killed criminal Fadil, a captain in Saddam's intelligence apparatus.

According to our sources in Kurdistan, criminal Fadil committed horrific crimes against citizens in Karkuk and detained women and children to put pressure on husbands and fathers opposed to the regime to surrender to the regime's forces.

Saddam Chairs Cabinet Session, Views 'Anti-Iraq Offensive'

JN2602110895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0900 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has said that the anti-Iraq offensive mounted by the enemies of Iraq and the nation targeted the new Iraqi individual and his exceptional potential for construction and work in defense of Iraq. This potential, he added, is the creative outcome of our cultural, political, educational, scientific, economic, and social accomplishments.

His excellency the president went on to say: The hallmark of our struggle is that it did not raise tactical slogans it could not implement. Our march has always

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spearheaded grassroots endeavors. Similarly, it has always remained capable of nurturing this exceptional potential for construction and defense, demonstrating a free national will, and supporting the nation's struggle in a tangible manner.

His excellency the president said: The blockade is the weapon used by feeble parties. The resources bestowed on Iraqis by the Almighty God in terms of their huge natural resources and their real wealth, which is the new Iraqi individual, will someday render the blockade a thing of the past, merely an additional experience for the Iraqis, who can boast a rich legacy of struggle.

These remarks by his excellency the president were made when he presided over the 10th session of the Council of Ministers.

The Council of Ministers reviewed the political state of affairs on the Arab and international scenes as well as the relationship between Iraq and the UN Security Council in the aftermath of a recent visit to Iraq by Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission.

The Council also debated the topics listed on its agenda and made the necessary decisions regarding them. It decided to earmark 218 million dinars to cover the administrative and operating expenses of the 1995 harvest campaign.

Regime Reportedly Executes 200 Prisoners

NC2502152095 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1445 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tyrant Saddam has committed a new crime against the Iraqi people. An Iraqi opposition source has stated that recently the regime executed approximately 200 Iraqi citizens in a number of tyrant Saddam's prisons. An eyewitness has confirmed that he personally saw between 40 to 45 men executed in the (Abu Ghurayb) prison alone. He pointed out that similar executions had been carried out by the regime in Karbala' that involved more than 150 persons.

The same source called for the dispatch of UN observers to Iraq to implement Security Council Resolution 688 on ending the regime's repressive measures against the Iraqi people.

Russia's Zhirinovskiy Arrives on Official Visit

Reiterates Party Support

JN2602112695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0918 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party and leader of the party's group at the Russian Parliament, arrived in Baghdad today at the head of a party and parliamentary delegation on a four-day official visit to Iraq.

In a statement to the Iraqi News Agency, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy hailed the courageous and wise leadership of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn. He expressed extreme pleasure with his current visit to Iraq, recalling the great impressions he gained after talks with his excellency the president during a previous visit to the country. He also reiterated that the people led by President Saddam Husayn are bound to emerge victorious.

Zhirinovskiy reiterated his party's support for Iraq, emphasizing that the Liberal Democratic Party has always been sympathetic to Iraq and its just causes. He commended the giant accomplishments made by Iraqis.

The Russian party leader underlined the importance of confronting hostile schemes, which aim to weaken peoples, plunder their resources, and rob them them of their independent political free will.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy urged world peoples as well as humanitarian and international organizations to make effective contributions toward lifting the economic embargo clamped on Iraq, particularly since Iraq has fulfilled all its commitments as enshrined in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. He indicated that this requires the UN Security Council to reciprocate by taking measures immediately revoking the sanctions in order to end the ordeal of all classes and sectors of the Iraqi people, who are being denied access to food and medicine.

Zhirinovskiy said that the Iraqis' steadfastness in the face of the most ferocious onslaught in contemporary history has confirmed the nobility of the Iraqi people, who are part of a a pedigreed nation that has an ancient history. This will help the Iraqi people occupy the position they deserve among the community of nations, and render them an example to be emulated by world peoples in their quest for vindicating sovereignty and independence, Zhirinovskiy noted.

Zhirinovskiy hoped that his current visit and meetings with Iraqi officials will contribute toward cementing the ties of friendship and cooperation between Iraq and Russia in all areas.

The delegation accompanying Vladimir Zhirinvoskiy comprises 50 deputies of the Russian Parliament, as well as pro-Iraq political and economic figures.

Denounces Blockade With Assembly Speaker

JN2602151695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1358 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has stressed that Iraq has a strong desire to establish advanced and close relations with the Russian Federation in various areas in order to serve the interests of both friendly countries and to bolster bilateral relations, particularly parliamentary ones.

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During his meeting today with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party and leader of the party's bloc in the Russian Parliament, and the delegation accompanying him, the National Assembly speaker highly praised the support the Russian Government and people are extending to Iraq's people in the face of the conspiracies and designs targeting their national security and sovereignty.

The National Assembly speaker reviewed the destructive impact of the imposed unjust blockade, which has killed thousands of children, the elderly, and the sick as a result of the acute shortage of food, medicine, and other basic needs.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy denounced the conspiracies the United States and its allies are concocting against Iraq, and well as the continuation of the blockade imposed on it. He asserted that his party and his parliamentary bloc will work hard to contribute to efforts to lift the blockade.

Zhirinovskiy highly praised the Iraqi people's courage, their heroic steadfastness in the face of aggression, and their strong confrontation, under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn, of all forms of colonialist hegemony, which the United States is trying to impose on the Arab region and the whole world.

He then expressed his hope that his visit would bolster friendship and cooperation between Iraq and the Russian Federation.

The meeting was attended by the Russian ambassador in Baghdad and Dr. Safa' Salih al-'Umar, chairman of the Arab and International Relations Committee at the National Assembly.

Visits Damaged Shelter, Assails U.S.

JN2602194295 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1850 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party and leader of the party's bloc in the Russian Parliament, has described the crime of aggression against the al-'Amiriyah shelter and the killing of the innocent sons of the Iraqi people as the ugliest in contemporary history.

In observations he wrote in the visitors' register during his visit to the shelter today, he asserted that the ugliness of the crime and the extent of damage caused to the shelter by the missiles of aggression clearly show the falsehood of the allegations of the United States and its allies about human rights, civilization, and progress.

Zhirinovskiy and his delegation then acquainted themselves with the shelter's contents and destruction, which reflects the brutality of the aggressors, the enemies of humanity, and their insistence on harming the patient, mujahid Iraqi people.

Discusses Ties With Tariq 'Aziz

JN2602211995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2050 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, official in charge of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, today received Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party, and his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral ties between the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the Liberal Democratic Party and ways of enhancing them in the interest of the two friendly countries and peoples.

Zhirinovskiy expressed appreciation for and admiration of Saddam Husayn's leadership. He also praised the steadfastness of the Iraqi people and its wise leadership in the face of aggression and the unjust blockade. He urged the international community to work toward lifting the unfair embargo imposed on the people of Iraq.

Tariq 'Aziz expressed Iraq's appreciation for the role played by Zhirinovskiy in promoting ties of friendship and cooperation between Iraq and Russia. 'Aziz said Iraq was happy that these ties have restored much of their vigor in the interest of the legitimate interests of the two countries and security and stability in the region.

The meeting was attended by the Russian ambassador in Baghdad and the director of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

Media Comment on Tour of U.S. Envoy Albright

INA: Tour Targets France, Russia

JN2402190595 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1840 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 24 Feb (INA)—The Associated Press [AP] has reported that the tour of Madeleine Albright, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, which includes a number of the capitals of the Security Council member states, aims at creating a new alliance against France and Russia within the Security Council.

The AP cited a U.S. official as saying: We have stricken off France and Russia. This is why Paris and Moscow are not included in Albright's tour. The U.S. official added: We will form a new axis in an attempt to strike at France and Russia.

The U.S. official added: The idea is to maintain the Iraq embargo through a vote, without the United States having to use a veto against an expected move by France and Russia.

Diplomatic sources in New York have said Albright stands a poor chance of success in its new mission because the current political climate is different from last year and the year before. In addition, Albright does not have diplomatic etiquette.

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The sources noted that sending Albright in this way to tour the countries that are members in the Security Council reflects a great concern on the part of the U.S. Administration and a weak political position at the Security Council—a case that is the first of its kind in the history of U.S. diplomacy.

Baghdad Radio Comments on Tour

JN2502204995 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Commentary from the "Spotlight on the News" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Administration has begun suspect political and diplomatic moves designed to continue the blockade imposed on Iraq.

The U.S. secretary of state is scheduled to visit the Zionist entity and a number of Arab regimes at the beginning of next month. Meanwhile, U.S. UN Representative Madeleine Albright is continuing a tour of some Security Council member states to pressure their governments into keeping the blockade imposed on the Iraqi people. On this issue, here is the following comment:

The U.S. Administration has begun to acknowledge its isolation at the United Nations [word indistinct] without prior warning, U.S. President Bill Clinton has decided to launch a diplomatic campaign to prevent lifting the embargo imposed on Iraq. He instructed his UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright to [words indistinct] in the capitals of some Security Council member states to urge them to support the U.S. position.

This is the first time U.S. diplomacy has made such a public tour, feverish move, and [words indistinct] to secure the positions of the states included in Albright's tour, now that the circle of supporters for the Iraqi position has expanded and the sustained pressures have increased to lift the blockade imposed on Iraq. This blockade no longer has any [words indistinct] justifications [words indistinct] feeling of concern and fears about the failure of (?its) influence inside the Security Council. This has prompted it to intensify the direct contacts and visits in an [word indistinct] attempt to gain further [words indistinct] the [word indistinct] diplomatic campaign confirms the collapse of the [? wall of alliance] [words indistinct] justifications, and that many [word indistinct] expressed their position which opposes and rejects the U.S. position, now that the clear and consistent Iraqi positions as well as the legendary Iraqi steadfastness have invalidated all the pretexts and justifications which are still being circulated by the United States, the enemy of mankind.

Regardless of [words indistinct], Albright will [words indistinct] support, sympathy, and amity for her aggressive positions. However, this support and sympathy will not last long. Exactly as the military aggression failed, [words indistinct], God willing, in spite of the United States. With God's help, all the aggressive U.S. attempts will be foiled, and Iraq will continue to be free, proud, and (?strong).

Paper: Tour Reflects 'Bankruptcy'

JN2602095695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has said that the current persuasion efforts by the United States with several members of the UN Security Council [UNSC] to ensure the perpetuation of the Iraq sanctions confirm the bankruptcy of the U.S. Administration.

In an article today entitled "The U.S. Administration's Bankruptcy," the paper adds: The endeavors being made by the United States to convince several UNSC members to withhold support for the efforts to lift the Iraq sanctions are doomed to failure. The paper notes that the U.S. argument for maintaining the sanctions is no longer strong.

The paper goes on to say: The United States can no longer pocket the support of the UNSC members for extending the Iraq sanctions regardless of Albright's tour or any other tactics, for that matter. These members cannot overlook the Iraqi people's ordeal caused by denying them access to food and medicine as a result of the criminal blockade, which is an unforgivable crime.

The paper believes that the entire world is now well aware that Iraq has fulfilled all the commitments stipulated in the unfair resolutions passed by the UNSC on behalf of the U.S. Administration. The paper asserts that it is high time the UNSC took the necessary steps to ease the blockade imposed on Iraq.

The paper concludes its article by saying that Albright's tour, which has taken her to states that have adopted clear stands on the Iraq issue and to others, whose positions are not yet clear, reflects the weak and shaky stand as well as bankruptcy of the U.S. Administration, which is using temptation and intimidation to make these states endorse the perpetuation of the unfair Iraq sanctions advancing lies that are loaded with hostility.

Clandestine Commentator Sees Prolonged Sanctions

NC2602160095 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1448 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, has started a shuttle tour of [words indistinct] Arab states, with the goal of influencing these states [words indistinct]. Albright's tour covers the 13 member states in the current session of the UN Security Council. The tour follows U.S. President Bill Clinton's reiteration that the

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international embargo on Iraq must be extended on the excuse that the regime has not complied with the UN resolutions.

This American step also follows the visit to Baghdad by Rolf Ekeus, head of the international commission in charge of inspecting Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. Following his visit of several days, Ekeus said that Saddam's regime is still far from complying with the UN resolutions. The regime has only complied with a small proportion of these resolutions.

Developments occurred following the regime's political and diplomatic moves and trade efforts with Western companies to achieve [word indistinct] in the international [word indistinct] that serves its objectives and interests, particularly lifting the political ban imposed on it, which might be more important to the regime than lifting the economic embargo imposed on our persecuted Iraqi people.

These developments indicate that the international embargo on Iraq will go on and our people will continue to live in a vicious circle of destruction, suffering, tragedy, and persecution. The regime will not be affected by this international embargo, which primarily affects our people. Indeed, the regime benefits from the embargo, using it to serve its cheap objectives, while our people suffer famine and a slow death.

Paper Urges 'Common Sense'

JN2702091395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0715 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH has asserted that the United States is no longer capable of dictating its wishes at the UN Security Council [UNSC]. It is currently leading an isolated minority that cannot dictate its wishes except through pressure and threats to use the veto right in case a draft proposal calling for a revocation of the Iraq sanctions is put to the vote at the UNSC, the paper argues.

In an article today, the paper adds that the fact that Madeleine Albright, U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations, has been compelled to tour the region confirms that other international powers no longer condone the U.S. blackmail and flagrant violation of the rules of international conduct. Besides, these powers are now seeking a revocation of the Iraq sanctions, particularly since Iraq has fulfilled all its obligations.

The paper goes on to say: The U.S. threat to use the veto, which is a last ditch effort by the United States to avert the collapse of the anti-Iraq international coalition and keep it alive, albeit in form, confirms that the international and regional developments currently under way in Iraq's favor are greater and more profound and serious than the United States would have us believe. This is because the use of the veto right would amount to a clear and official acknowledgement of the irrevocable collapse of the coalition.

The paper explains that the desire to do good deeds and safeguard peoples' dignity cannot be overwhelmed by the evils of the United States and the crimes of its decisionmakers committed to halt the peoples' quest for development. History testifies that the Arab nation, represented by Iraq, has triumphed over imperialism and Zionism, the paper says.

The paper concludes its article by urging Madeleine Albright to demonstrate common sense and wisdom, halt the harm inflicted on the Iraqi people, and put an end to the hysterical conduct, which shows that the world's greatest power cannot restrain and control itself.

Opposition Radio Views Tour

JN2702114595 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1810 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Gulf states are these days seeking the support of Madeleine Albright, U.S. representative to the United Nations. The degree of the Gulf states' affection toward her is almost the same as toward former U.S. President George Bush during the Desert Storm days. This active (?Danish) woman is making a tour that will include a number of Gulf states and other UN Security Council member states. This tour aims to convey her government's views on the international sanctions imposed on Iraq, and the need for these states to abide by the declared U.S. stand on this issue, particularly during the convocation of the UN Security Council meeting scheduled for mid-March.

In the Omani capital, Muscat, Albright stressed that the Saddam regime should implement all the international resolutions. She also emphasized the issue of the Kuwaiti POW's and the return of the Kuwaiti military equipment which was plundered by Saddam during the invasion of Kuwait.

As is the U.S. custom, Madeleine Albright did not say that the dictatorial regime is fully responsible for the Iraqi people's suffering. She pointed out that Saddam had the opportunity to alleviate the Iraqi people's suffering as a result of the unjust international blockade which has been clamped on our people for more than four years. However, mentioning the Iraqi people's suffering was not an essential part in the U.S. representative's tour. What is important for her is to maintain the sanctions and to mobilize international support for renewing this resolution during the next month. At any rate, the Americans recognize this suffering and its causes, and the nature of the regime which is ruling this afflicted country.

The tyrant's regime has expressed its annoyance with Albright's tour. The 'Aflaqite newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH said that Washington seeks to tighten

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the grip on Iraq and increase its international isolation. This is a deceptive attempt to make the public opinion inside Iraq believe that there is increasing support at the UN Security Council for the lifting of sanctions, and that Albright has come to put an end to this support.

The tyrant's regime which has failed to ease the international sanctions seeks, through cheap propaganda and sugar-coated promises, to divert the Iraqi people's attention from the tragic situation and catastrophe which has befallen Iraq as a result of reckless policies and tyrannical decisions by a corrupt regime and a tyrant whose thinking has never gone beyond his own illness, deceit, and hallucinations which led Iraq to its current paralyzed situation and an economy which is proceeding toward the abyss.

From this review, it becomes clear that there is an actual race in progress and that hot issues are being moved around like pawns on a chess board, with each player seeking to defeat the other [word indistinct] a state. However, on the edge of the chess board, there are people who are being slaughtered by the bitter suffering and affected by hunger and deprivation of food and medicine, and of imports and exports. All that is available to this people are repression, terrorism, and the oppressive and coercion campaigns. The strange thing is that this suffering has become a strategic crossing point for both America and Saddam to win international support, each according to its own views which serve its undeclared objectives. However, no one doubts that neither America nor tyrant Saddam really seek to end the suffering of the Iraqi people and save them from the mill of hunger and pain. Saddam is only interested in how he can continue to rule Iraq for a longer period. America is interested in achieving its objectives in Iraq and the region. Between this and that, the international blockade and sanctions are being tightened on Iraq day after day to make its people taste pain the like of which they have never experienced throughout their ancient and modern history. So, they remain patient, but how long will this patience last? Does patience not have limits? Does patience not have an end?

Paper: Tour 'Carrot-And-Stick Policy'

JN2502081395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0722 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Feb (INA)—AL-IRAQ has said that America's hostile stand and insane desire to increase the suffering of the Iraqi people will continue most vigorously to block any attempt to end the unfair blockade and expose the mean U.S. plots.

In an article today, the paper says that U.S. Permanent UN Representative Madeleine Albright's trips to several countries that are members of the UN Security Council is evidence of the attempts to pressure those countries into opposing any expected change in the interest of Iraq.

The paper adds that this tour reveals the arbitrary and extortionist methods being adopted within the carrot-and-stick policy to peddle wicked schemes, especially when the United States senses any indication of the emergence of stands opposed to its hostile policy.

The paper refers to the tour that former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker made of world capitals before the 30-state aggression against Iraq in 1990 to pressure them into participating in that aggression. Then, the paper says, Baker pursued illegitimate and crooked means in an attempt to thwart any endeavor to resolve the problem peacefully and without resorting to military aggression.

The paper explains that any careful reading of the unfair and illegitimate U.S. stand on Iraq since the beginning of the aggression reveals the U.S. Administration's inability to stack the cards in its favor, and that this administration's ongoing attempts are the outcome of its anxiety and failure to achieve its evil plots, which aim to perpetuate the blockade. It also reveals the strength of Iraq's position and the fairness of its cause, especially in view of its compliance with all relevant UN resolutions.

Paper Urges Russia, France To Oppose U.S. on Sanctions

JN2702103895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has asserted that Albright's tour is a last ditch effort by the U.S. Administration to perpetuate the Iraq sanctions as part of its anti-Iraq strategy.

In an article today, the paper adds that this U.S. endeavor is more of a colonialist adventure than a balanced political move that is sure of the results and of the course taken by the far-reaching changes currently overwhelming the world.

The paper goes on to say: The tour of Madeleine Albright, U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations, has come to redress the failure of the Kuwaiti foreign minister's tour of the same UN Security Council [UNSC] members' capitals included in Albright's itinerary despite the bribes he offered and the big promises he made to these capitals if they adopt an anti-Iraq stance at the UNSC. Nonetheless, this endeavor will not enable the United States to redress the Kuwaiti failure, because it reflected an uncalculated reaction that cannot control the positions of UNSC members for long.

The paper explains that this U.S. endeavor to change the stands of UNSC members and control the majority of

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UNSC members who support a revocation of the Iraq sanctions is designed to prevent the latter from using the veto right, which could adversely affect the U.S. strategy in general, even though if all that the United States wants at present is to influence the next UNSC periodic review session of the sanctions in order not to appear as a vanquished party.

The paper adds: The countries that have supported a revocation or mitigation of the sanctions, thus taking an ethical stand, must respect their positions before their public and the world community, not to mention that their national interests and special considerations, which dictated stands supportive of a revocation of the sanctions, are bound to suffer if they allow themselves to be manipulated by U.S. pressures, particularly with regard to their future ties with Iraq.

The paper emphasizes that Russia and France, which have adopted a just stand calling for a revocation or mitigation of the sanctions, must launch a special effort to counter U.S. pressures, particularly since what is taking place is a public conflict over interests that requires the two permanent members of the UNSC, two superpowers in their own right, to support their positions, which demand a revocation of the Iraq sanctions on ethical and humanitarian grounds, not to mention the promotion of their national interests entailed.

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Iranian Exile Details Evidence of Arad's Detention

TA2502202695 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Report on "exclusive" interview with Iranian exile Manuchehr Mo'tamer by unidentified correspondent "over the weekend;" place not given—recorded, in Farsi with Hebrew subtitles and translated from the subtitles; all Iranian names as transliterated]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Channel 2 News Department has conducted an exclusive interview with Iranian exile Manuchehr Mo'tamer. His claim that he saw Ron Arad alive less than a year ago was aired here for the first time on 23 February. A Channel 2 News Department crew located him over the weekend. In an interview, which we received via a special satellite, Mo'tamer reveals that Ron Arad is in very poor physical and mental condition. He says the Iranians keep moving him from place to place in order to break his spirit.

Israeli security elements are checking out the information provided in the interview. They say they are unable to corroborate the information for the time being. Here is the full interview:

[Correspondent] Mr. Mo'tamer, what was your official position in the Iranian regime?

[Mo'tamer] I was a representative of Mr. Khamene'i's regime at the Information Ministry between 1985 and 1994.

[Correspondent] When did you meet Israeli navigator Ron Arad?

[Mo'tamer] A month before I left Iran.

[Correspondent] Where was Ron Arad?

[Mo'tamer] He was in prison in the city of Esfahan. The name of the prison was Dasta Gard (the round hand). This is an Information Ministry prison. He was the only foreign inmate at the prison, and I asked the prison warden, Akhbar Buharani, about him. He confirmed that the man was the Zionist Ron Arad. I saw him sitting in his cell. He had scars from an operation on the left side of his body. There were sores on his face, and his eyebrows were hairier than usual. The prison guards told me: He is the despicable Zionist navigator who bombed Lebanon, and now he is here.

[Correspondent] What was your impression of his physical condition?

[Mo'tamer] I regret to say that he seemed to be in very poor physical condition. I repeat: I am sorry to tell the Israelis that he was in very bad shape. His mental state was very bad. Every few months, he is moved from place to place. They are trying to break him mentally and physically.

I approached the Israeli Embassy in Ecuador on my own initiative, and I was even prepared to come to Israel, for which I requested a visa to Israel. The Israelis asked me to wait. Several Israelis met with me at the Israeli Embassy in Ecuador and talked to me for two days. All the conversations, however, were about the explosion at the Israeli Embassy in Argentina. I was not asked about the navigator.

[Correspondent] Why did you keep silent about navigator Ron Arad until now?

[Mo'tamer] For a few days now, I have been hearing that a German journalist has been reporting about Arad, Israel, Germany, and Iran. This was first published in a German newspaper, and then all over the world. I said to myself: As a matter of fact, I know him myself; I have seen this man. I have evidence that proves it was the navigator.

[Correspondent] Do you have any message for his wife, Tami Arad?

[Mo'tamer] Yes. I have a message both for his wife and his mother. The message is: Your husband is alive; your son is alive. I kiss his mother's hand, and I am full of admiration. They should be proud that he has survived despite all the suffering. I hope to meet them somewhere some day.

Rabin's Bureau Dismisses Mo'tamer Remarks

TA2602095695 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 26 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Pe'erli Shahar]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's bureau said it has no intention of looking into the remarks by Iranian exile Manchehr Mo'tamer since he is a cheat and crook and should not be taken seriously. It was reported that two months ago the man, who says he belonged to Iranian Intelligence, gave an interview to an Israeli newspaper [MA'ARIV] in which he said that he had never seen Ron Arad. The interview, which was not published, was brought to the attention of Israeli defense elements.

The prime minister's bureau expressed surprise at the extensive play given to the interview by the Israeli electronic media, since the man was found to be lying. The bureau also noted that the Iranian's claims in the media upset the Arad family, which should also be taken into consideration. [passage omitted]

Rabin, IDF Release Statements on Arad Affair

TA2602193195 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Rina Matzliah video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] This evening, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin reacted for the first time to the recent

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reports on the Ron Arad affair. Rabin says that as long as it has not been proven otherwise, Israel believes Ron Arad is alive and the Israeli Government considers Iran responsible for his fate. Our correspondent Rina Matzliah heard the prime minister this evening:

[Begin Rabin recording] I do not want to refer to stories or reports. Our basic assumption regarding this person, who we know for a fact was alive a year or more after he fell prisoner, is that as long as it has not been proven otherwise, he is alive. The second thing is that we have good reason to assume he is being held by Iranian Government elements—this, without knowing exactly where he is being held. Therefore, we regard the Iranian Government as the party responsible for his life, for everything he undergoes, and for returning him home safe and sound. I cannot say anything more at this point. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 26 February carries a related report on Rabin's remarks on the Arad affair, adding: "The prime minister also explained that, approximately one year ago, he established a committee to look into the way in which the POW and MIA issue is being handled, because he believed it to be advisable to periodically replace the officials who handle this issue. The committee was also charged with checking whether the path being followed is the correct path, and not because of a sense that not enough has been done in this regard."]

We have more details about the official reaction released this evening by the defense minister's media adviser and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman following the recent publications on the Ron Arad affair: The Iranian authorities have been holding Ron Arad for more than six years, and they are directly and fully responsible for his fate, health, and return to Israel safe and sound. This statement is based on credible and solid information. Iran systematically refrains from releasing any information on Ron Arad's fate, while denying—contrary to the truth—that it knows anything about him. Regarding the hearsay evidence on Ron Arad's presence in an Iranian prison, it does not include any clear and solid sign of life from Arad and cannot be confirmed or refuted. It is important to emphasize, however, that Israel has solid grounds for believing that Iran has direct control over Ron Arad's fate.

The Israeli statement concludes by stating that Israel considers Iran responsible for Ron Arab's fate and calls on Iran to fulfill its basic obligation as a UN member to enable Ron Arab to contact his family and to bring about his immediate release and return to Israel safe and sound.

Rabin Confers With Aide of Germany's Kohl

TA2702120095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin conferred this morning with Joachim Bieterlich, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's aide. The prime minister raised the issue of the reports in the German press about navigator Ron Arad as well as Germany's trade ties with Iran. Bieterlich explained that the issue was not within his authority, but said he understood the suffering caused by the inaccurate and irresponsible reports, as he put it.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz that the prime minister reviewed the peace process and stressed the threat Iran poses to stability in the region. The prime minister also noted the need to help Jordan build dams on the Jordan and al-Yarmuk Rivers.

Our correspondent adds that Chancellor Kohl will visit Israel in early June.

Gur: Navy Blockade To Stop Lebanese 'Terrorism'

TA2602090695 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Telephone interview with Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur by Mikha Friedman and Gilat Mo'av; place not given—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Friedman] Good morning to Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur.

[Gur] Good morning.

[Friedman] The Israeli cabinet visited south Lebanon at the end of last week and met with SLA [South Lebanese Army] Commander Antoine Lahd. At the end of the tour, several ministers said that they now realized that a bona fide war was taking place there. Is the Israeli naval blockade of the south Lebanese coast, and even of areas north of that, part of this war?

[Gur] Obviously this is part of the war. This, however, constitutes nothing new. What must be made clear both to the Lebanese and the Syrians who support them is that concern over the severity of the situation will not be limited to one party. In other words, it is not only the Israeli Government that will be meeting to examine what can be done. If we have to suffer, then our neighbors will not be left in peace.

[Friedman] Why should our neighbors not be left in peace? Why is Israel extending this struggle far north of the security zone?

[Gur] We seek only one thing: an end to terrorist activity from south Lebanon against Israeli settlements. If such activity stops, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will withdraw. This depends solely on the Lebanese Government. The Lebanese Government can decide whether it wants to remain a Syrian satellite and act on their behalf or whether it wants to enforce its authority over Hizballah, as it has over the other militias, and prevent its activity. If the Lebanese Government does this, then the two countries can reach a peace agreement within two days.

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[Friedman] Why does Israel pressure only the Lebanese Government but refrain from exerting direct pressure on Syria which, although it can formally claim that the terrorist attacks come from Lebanon, actually bears a larger degree of responsibility for the situation?

[Gur] There is more to this than just a formal argument. The Syrians take pains not to heat up their own border with Israel. We have no interest in opening up a new front. The fighting on the Lebanese front is initiated by Hizballah, which is a purely Lebanese organization. The Lebanese Government is responsible for whatever takes place on its territory. Over the past two years, we have made endless attempts to reach an understanding with Lebanon. Moreover, we had hoped to reach an understanding with Syria through Lebanon, but Beirut remains obdurate and we are fighting a tough war there, which occasionally causes us sharp pain. It is therefore very important for Lebanon to recognize the situation for what it is and realize that it must be stopped.

[Friedman] You are centering all your answers on the issue of terrorism. However, there is another version, also confirmed by anonymous Israeli sources, which asserts that the purpose of Israel's naval blockade of Lebanese ports is to retaliate for the authorities' harassment of south Lebanon residents and has nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism.

[Gur] I do not deal with all kinds of speculation by various third-rate analysts. I am explaining the policy of the Israeli Government. We have only one aim: to stop the terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians. Once this happens, our soldiers will withdraw and there will be no reason to act against them either. This depends exclusively on the Lebanese Government. If it cares about its citizens then things will quiet down there. On the other hand, if it prefers to capitulate to the Syrians, then the war will continue, and in all directions.

[Friedman] What does this blockade entail? How does it affect the Lebanese population?

[Gur] I do not want to get into the operational details of everything we do. We are talking about a situation in which we seek to limit Hizballah's ability to strike at our soldiers who are there together with the SLA to defend our citizens and the residents of south Lebanon. The equation is very simple: Lebanon must take the necessary steps to stop terrorism against us and then we will pull out.

[Friedman] Mr. Gur, last week a former Iranian intelligence operative, who is now in exile, said that he had personally seen navigator Ron Arad who was being held in a prison in Tehran or perhaps elsewhere. How much credibility would you give these reports?

[Gur] We are making great efforts in numerous fields in this regard. However, since we view the issue of Ron Arad as so important and such a serious responsibility, I prefer not to comment about it in the media at all.

[Friedman] Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur, we will respect this request and wish you a very good day.

'Ivri on NPT Talks, Iran Threat, U.S. Stance

TA2402131495 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (SHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 24 Feb 95 pp 2, 3

[Interview with Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri by correspondent 'Oded Granot; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Granot] In fact, why should we not sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]?

['Ivri] Disarmament truly is Israel's long-term goal, but first we want to attain a stable peace with all the countries in the region and to lower the security tension by cutting down the size of the forces. As we see it, conventional arms, too, can be weapons of mass destruction. When the aforementioned goals are attained we will be prepared to tackle the issue of a nuclear-free zone.

We have only just started a peace process, and there are many risks on the way. I can understand Egypt's strategic attitude demanding that we sign the NPT. I do not think we should argue over that, but rather over the question of when and how to do it. That is our problem.

[Granot] How far will our confrontation with Egypt go?

['Ivri] In my opinion, the tension will last at least until April when the NPT review conference is scheduled to be held. The tension has already reached the highest levels, which should not have happened, and now tempers must be calmed. Egypt is too important a country for us to enter a confrontation with it.

[Granot] Do we have a formula that will enable Egypt to save face and will not necessitate our signing the NPT?

['Ivri] We are trying to meet them halfway as much as we can, taking Israel's security constraints into consideration and to propose formulas that the Egyptians could perhaps accept. To the best of my knowledge, we are not going to allow them to visit Dimona. At most, we will allow them to tour the town of Dimona. In the past we proposed that they visit the reactor at Nahal Soreq, but they did not accept the offer. To date they have not accepted any of our proposals, but only firmly demanded that we sign the NPT. Why is this happening? It is hard for me to tell. Some of the people take the issue personally.

[Granot] Do the Americans unequivocally support our refusal to sign the treaty?

['Ivri] The United States would like us to sign it, but realizes that this is not the right time to pressure us because our leaders are taking a lot of risks in many other areas.

[Granot] Are they getting impatient with the Egyptians?

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['Ivri] They speak to them and try to counsel them not to drive Israel into a corner. On the other hand, the Americans fear that other countries might follow in Egypt's footsteps and refuse to renew the NPT. Were the Americans absolutely certain that over 85 countries would renew their signature or join the NPT they would leave the Middle East alone.

[Granot] Do you know about any Arab countries that have already promised the Americans that they will sign?

['Ivri] In my opinion, a great deal of uncertainty will prevail until April. Any country disclosing its position one way or another will be asking for pressure.

[Granot] Are the Egyptians pressuring the Arab countries not to sign?

['Ivri] They have led the United States to believe that they will not pressure other countries; however, the very fact that Egypt announced that it will not sign the treaty unless Israel does is a sufficiently strong message to those countries.

[Granot] Does the Egyptian demand complicate the multilateral talks on arms control and make life harder for the delegation you head?

['Ivri] In the last meeting in Tunis we agreed on a joint naval exercise with the participation of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and officers from 14 countries. We also agreed on other issues, such as the establishment of regional centers to prevent conflicts. What is actually "stuck" is the declaration, which was almost ready for publication when the Egyptians insisted on adding a clause concerning the NPT, which held up everything. The Egyptian interference halted the publication of the document.

[Granot] Will the naval exercise scheduled for next month be held as planned?

['Ivri] At this stage I do not know about any country's bowing out of it. The issue was misrepresented in the media. The impression given was that Israel would be an active participant, whereas we will only be there as observers. In the previous exercise Canada and the United States demonstrated how to deal with an incident at sea. Now we will be taking another step forward. Countries will participate with their own ships, and this will already be a regional exercise. If asked whether Israel will be taking part, the Arab countries will say no, and they will be right. It is hard for them to admit publicly that they will be participating in an exercise together with Israel.

At many points along the way the Saudis objected to confidence-building and normalization processes. We were initially surprised by it, because we felt that both we and they had been victims of the Gulf war and that Scuds had fallen on both us and them. However, they were committed to the Syrians, and they felt uncomfortable about the fact that the Syrians had not joined in. Recently they seem to have understood that they must ease up, and they have relaxed. So, either this reflects their coming to terms with reality or it has to do with their relations with the United States.

[Granot] Let us move on to the Iranian threat. Foreign Minister Peres was told in France that the Iranians will have a bomb within three years. Is it really so imminent, or is somebody trying to intimidate us?

['Ivri] Regarding anyone who thinks he can cite an exact date, I would let him entertain the illusion that he really knows. In my opinion, an exact date does not exist. The main risk is that a country like Iran might acquire components and systems with which they can largely promote their production abilities.

The Iranians continue to develop the human infrastructure for the production of nuclear weapons. They have sent people to study nuclear physics, ostensibly for civilian purposes. Some of these people are of a very high level.

The main problem is the plans, intentions, and policy of the Iranian Government to acquire nuclear weapons. It is hiding things; it has been buying Scud-C's; it wants to get Nodong missiles; and it has Sukhoi-24's. The State of Israel must come up with an answer as soon as possible, regardless of whether Iran attains its goals within three or five years. On the one hand, diplomatic action on the international level is needed to stop them, while on the other we must prepare ourselves for all other possible forms of action.

[Granot] One theory has it that in the long run it will be impossible to keep the Iranians from getting the bomb.

['Ivri] They can be stopped, but only on the condition that the international community really makes all possible efforts. At the moment, they have a lot of Scuds, and the Russians are selling them civilian reactors. This will enable them to attain a military potential. The Chinese are also selling them. Without assistance and support from the outside, the Iranians will need more than three to five years to produce nuclear weapons by themselves.

Furthermore, we saw what happened in Iraq. Had their nuclear reactor not been bombed and had it not been for the Gulf war, the Iraqis would most probably have a nuclear bomb today.

[Granot] Are the Americans determined to stop Iran's efforts to obtain nuclear weapons?

['Ivri] U.S. anxieties are gradually growing. Perhaps they could have exerted more pressure on the Russians not to sell the reactors, but when you see their delicate relationship with Russia and the Russian Government's instability it is hard to say that this would have been the right move. The Americans think they are doing the maximum they can, but I believe that more should be done. The fact is that the Iranians are making progress in the nuclear sphere.

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[Granot] Are foreign scientists active in Iran?

['Ivri] There have occasionally been reports to this effect, but their presence is on a low profile.

[Granot] Could the Iranians be closer to developing nuclear weapons than we think?

['Ivri] We are more anxious about Iran than other countries, but our exchanges of information and assessments with the United States about the Iranian threat are more serious than ever before. On the Iraqi issue we had never cooperated on such a scale.

[Granot] What about the cooperation between North Korea and Iran and Syria?

['Ivri] The Americans made the main effort to stop the North Koreans on the nuclear issue. They promised to reward them with some $4 billion. This will apparently stop them on this count, but they continue to supply Scud missiles to Iran, as well as the know- how to attain a self-production ability. The Scuds threaten Iraq and the Persian Gulf. They cannot reach Israel, but the technological ability acquired by the Iranians concerning the Scuds is significant in other areas.

[Granot] And what about long-range missiles?

['Ivri] The North Korean Nodong missiles are not yet ready from the point of view of technological development. I do not know North Korea's intentions on this issue.

Police Disperse Arab Disturbance in East Jerusalem

TA2602071295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Police and Border Police dispersed a few hundred Arabs who gathered outside Damascus Gate at the entrance to Jerusalem's Old City last night and threw rocks at the police. The disturbances came as 70,000 Muslim worshipers made their way to the Temple Mount for prayers marking the end of Ramadan. [passage omitted]

IDF Intelligence: Al-Asad Sticking to Peace Process

TA2602114395 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Feb 95 p A1

[Report by Eytan Rabin and 'Aqiva Eldar]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Major General Uri Sagi, head of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch, presented the branch's official assessment to Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, at Rabin's Tel Aviv office Friday [24 February].

Participating in the deliberations were Brigadier General Ya'aqov 'Amidror, head of the Intelligence Branch's Research Department, Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq, and other senior officers.

A military source said that based on the Intelligence Branch's assessment there is no certainty that there will be a breakthrough in the peace negotiations with Syria this year. According to this evaluation, al-Asad is sticking to the peace process despite his hostile declarations, but is making tough demands and is unprepared to give up a centimeter of the Golan Heights.

The Intelligence Branch's evaluation says Syria is interested in the peace process, but is presenting demands very hard for Israel to accept. Damascus is still insisting on not holding any direct contact with Israel.

In his report, Gen. Sagi surveyed the latest meetings between Israeli and Syrian officers. It seems that the commander of the Syrian Army, Gen. Hikmat Shihabi, refused to shake hands with the (then) Israeli Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq in meetings they held in Washington. Nevertheless, in the Intelligence Branch's view, due to U.S. pressure, the indirect Israeli-Syrian contacts will continue. It is, however, now clear that the Syrian president will continue to harden his position as long as Israel does not clarify its position on the Golan Heights. [passage omitted]

Israel's ambassador in Washington Itamar Rabinovich, who left for consultations in Jerusalem prior to the secretary of state's visit, told HA'ARETZ that parallel to the effort to renew the negotiations with Syria, appearances are very important since the secretary has not visited the region for two months. Therefore, the message that the United States continues to show an interest in the Middle East peace process is important.

Rabinovich said that while Yasir 'Arafat has raised doubts about the willingness of Israel and the United States to advance, Israel is interested in finding out whether the difficulties raised by al-Asad are tactical or based on principle.

Radio Reports Palestinian Officer Deported to Jordan

TA2702113395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1115 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Report by correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem in the territories—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ben-Menahem] Muhammad Jamil al-'Isawi, an officer of the Palestinian Security Service, is at this very moment being transferred to the other side of the Allenby Bridge. Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that Israel Police officers handed the man over to the Jordanians, thus carrying out the deportation order issued against him by the Interior Ministry at the request of the Shin Bet.

It is not yet clear whether Jordan will agree to accept the man or return him to Israel. In any event, the Palestinians claim that the PLO ambassador in Jordan has

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informed him on behalf of the Jordanians that they will not accept him. If that is the case, the officer will have to return to prison in Israel.

Al-'Isawi was transferred this morning from the Russian Compound lock-up in Jerusalem to the Allenby Bridge in order to carry out the deportation order issued by the Interior Ministry.

Muhammad Jamil al-'Isawi was one of Yasir 'Arafat's bodyguards in Tunis three years ago. He is a member of the Western Front, a 400-man Fatah faction whose members are being denied entry into the territories by Israel. Al-'Isawi is personally suspected of planning attacks on Israel. He apparently managed to sneak in through the Allenby Bridge with a visa issued under a different name, Muhammad al-Sha'ib. He was arrested on 16 January at the Erez checkpoint based on information gathered by the Shin Bet, taken to Ashqelon Prison for interrogation, and later issued a deportation order. Israel turned down the Palestinian request to deport him to the boundaries of the autonomy and insisted on deporting him to Jordan.

U.S. Expert Believes Iraq Behind WTC Bombing

TA2702090995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Feb 95 p A5

["Exclusive" report by correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar in Washington]

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—The United States is checking suspicions that Iraq, rather than radical Muslim groups backed by Iran, is behind the World Trade Center [WTC] bombing in New York two years ago.

A senior administration official told HA'ARETZ that at this point investigators only have circumstantial evidence that the Iraqi regime is behind the terrorist Ramzi Yusuf, who entered the United States with an Iraqi passport and was apprehended in Pakistan last month.

According to the senior official, the Justice Department and the FBI are treating the comprehensive study conducted by Iraq expert Dr. Laurie Milroy very seriously. It points to Saddam Husayn as being responsible for the death of six civilians in the Manhattan bombing, which occurred at about the same time as the attempt to assassinate former U.S. President George Bush during a visit to Kuwait.

Milroy argues that shortly before a U.S. informer brought about his capture in Islamabad, Yusuf had been busy planning a mass terror attack on U.S. aircraft in the Philippines. Soon after the New York attack, Yusuf went to Baluchistan, an area known for its close ties with Iraq.

Milroy said in an interview with HA'ARETZ that the U.S. establishment is not interested in exposing the Iraqi connection to terror attacks, particularly to the Manhattan bombing, because it would disrupt the trial of Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and his cohorts. According to her, the legal authorities did a very poor job of checking the thousands of documents confiscated from the homes of the defendants currently on trial.

Milroy showed the HA'ARETZ correspondent thick files containing records of phone calls made to Baghdad by the defendants. According to her, nobody attempted to follow up on them except her. The files also contain photographs of a forged Kuwaiti passport which was used by the terrorists. The passport was owned by one of the thousands of Kuwaitis missing since the Iraqi invasion.

Milroy claims that the Manhattan bombing was meant to kill tens of thousands of people and that it does not resemble terror attacks in the Middle East, including those perpetrated by radical Muslim groups against Israeli targets.

She compiled a file of official and semi-official Iraqi statements containing veiled threats about using terror against the United States. BABIL, a newspaper owned by Saddam Husayn's son, wrote last September that "the United States must understand that there is a limit to Iraq's patience and should not think that the destruction of Iraqi missiles and other weapons will divest the Iraqi people of its ability to influence the course of history."

An editorial in the Iraqi paper AL-JUMHURIYAH stated that "any Iraqi can go to countries and cities. If you want, we will remove our coat of discipline and turn into everything that scares you."

In an interview yesterday with NBC, Milroy cautioned against further Iraqi attacks on U.S. targets and claimed that the U.S. legal and investigation systems are ill-prepared to fight terror perpetrated by other countries.

James Fox, the former New York FBI chief who headed the investigation into the Manhattan bombing for 10 months, told the Baltimore's THE SUN that he was rather impressed with Milroy's analysis and that so were other retired investigators who examined the material.

Government Aim for Integration in Region Questioned

TA2602165295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Feb 95 p B1

[Commentary by 'Uzi Benziman: "The Integration Delusion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The question that arises in the wake of the disappointing outcome of the Peres-Mubarak encounter last weekend is whether it was only a failure to settle the dispute on ways to purge the Middle East of nuclear weapons or perhaps a much more critical development: an Arab rejection of Israel's attempts to be integrated into the Arab arena. In the past two years, Israel has often resembled a visitor who bores his hosts until the late hours, who forces his presence on them

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until they feel so resentful that they grab him by the collar and show him to the door—at which point he says: Okay, I get it; I can take a hint.

Shim'on Peres was full of good intentions when he left for Egypt. He managed to convince Yitzhaq Rabin to soften Israel's declarative stand on the time frame in which Israel would be prepared to contemplate a discussion of nuclear demilitarization in the Middle East. Peres informed Husni Mubarak that two years after Israel signs peace treaties with all the countries in the region—including Iran, Libya, and Iraq—it will strive to establish a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. This was the first time Israel referred to a specific date for the start of talks on regional nuclear disarmament.

The new declaration did not satisfy the Egyptian president, who remained adamant about Israel's being more definite regarding its readiness to allow international inspectors to visit its nuclear installations. The Egyptian stand gives rise to a question—even a suspicion: Does it represent genuine vexation over Israel's inflexibility on this sensitive issue; does it reflect a genuine fear of Israel's nuclear potential; does it express Egypt's effort to boost its leadership in the Arab world—or does it contain something else, too?

Israel has courted Egypt and been spurned ever since the peace treaty between the two countries was signed. Cairo was never short of weighty reasons for its refusal to imbue its peace relations with Israel with a little warmth: There was the condition that Israel withdraw from Lebanon, then the demand that it settle the Taba dispute, then the demand that it make Hafiz al-Asad a generous offer, and then the demand that it recognize the PLO. As is evident, Egypt remained hostile to Israel even after these obstacles were removed. To account for its current conduct, it points to the crucial dispute over the nuclear issue.

This dispute does hover over the relationship between the two countries, and each side has its own good reasons to adhere to its stands. And yet, the dispute can either be put on ice or be constantly rekindled. The Egyptians seem to be deliberately choosing the second option: They have turned the Dimona reactor into radioactive material which pollutes the relationship between the two countries. Moreover, they methodically spread the fallout throughout the entire Middle East in order to impede—perhaps even torpedo—the Israeli endeavor toward integration into the region.

It is no use denying the outcome: Shim'on Peres was unable to convince President Mubarak to end his anti-Israeli offensive on the nuclear issue. 'Ezer Weizman's efforts on the matter were also of no avail. The impression Peres left a month ago of having convinced 'Amr Musa to drop the public argument with Israel was also disproved.

There seems to be no escaping the conclusion that the Israeli statesmen are deluding themselves: The nuclear controversy may be an Egyptian ploy rather than a bona fide problem. It is possible that they are clinging to it in order to give us the boot.

Here is another interpretation of Egypt's conduct: Like the other Arab leaders, Mubarak sees Israel only as a necessary evil. Emotionally and conceptually, neither Mubarak nor the other leaders have come to terms with the existence of a Jewish state in the Arab arena. Israel's conduct over the past two years has reawakened fears and grudges: Despite Israel's good intentions, the Arab side resents Israel's initiative and power (the Casablanca conference); its enterprise and the arrogance ("a new Middle East," "regional education plans"); and its political eagerness ("Israel should be part of the Arab League").

Perhaps we would do well to shift into low gear, quit seeking involvement in Middle East politics, and stop walking through the doors that have been opening recently into the world of pan-Arab intrigue. Perhaps the inevitable conclusion is that, fundamentally, the State of Israel and the area surrounding it are separated by a vast conceptual abyss. We do not share much with the political system of King Hassan of Morocco or the sultan of Oman. We can make do with little: the cessation of the state of war; the official termination of hostilities; and the slow development of peaceful relations at a pace suitable to the Arab desire. We must admit that, at this time, the Israeli vision of integration into the regional arena seems to be a delusion.

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Opposition Asks Congress To Resist Ties With Israel

JN2502182695 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1535 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 25 Feb (SANA)—Jordanian party sources have stated that the 11-member Jordanian opposition party coalition has drawn up a draft document containing a complete program to resist normalization with Israel and diminish the dangers of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

The opposition parties are seeking to convene a popular national congress in April to discuss ways to protect the homeland from normalization. Therefore, these parties have applied to the government to allow them to convene the congress.

The party sources said that if it is allowed to convene, the congress is expected to include a large sector of parties, trade unions, popular bodies, chambers of industry and commerce, and national figures rejecting normalization and surrender. The congress will also invite committees from similar fronts in the Arab homeland to take part.

The same sources added that the congress would show the dangers of the Oslo agreement, the Jordanian-Israeli treaty, and the so-called new Middle East project, and would also seek to mobilize Jordanian public opinion to confront the dangers of surrender and normalization.

The parties will submit a report to the congress, if convened, stipulating that the Oslo agreement and the Jordanian-Israeli treaty were reached under the worst circumstances on both the Arab and international levels and at the expense of the Arab nation's right to freedom, independence, and progress.

The report reviews the dangers of the Jordanian-Israeli treaty and says the treaty has enabled Israel to get what it failed to get through military force.

The report, extracts of which were published in several Joranian weeklies, also says that the treaty is a unilateral solution with an enemy that is still holding Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian territories, opens the door wide for attempts to build an Israeli- dominated new Middle East system, and is viewed as aggression on national sovereignty because it has allowed the enemy to occupy Jordanian areas in the north and the south.

The report also shows that the treaty avoids raising the issue of Jerusalem as occupied Palestinian land, a fact which constitutes an official Jordanian recognition of what Israel alleges about Jerusalem.

The report then urges the Jordanian people to adhere to their sacred historical rights and to the charter for protecting the homeland and to confront normalization in various cultural, social, economic, and touristic areas, considering that the Zionist movement poses a sweeping danger to the Arab nation. This, the report says, requires us to resist any measure or justification for dealing with the Zionist enemy.

French Diplomat, Wife Attacked in al-Mawjib Area

JN2402143195 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An Interior Ministry responsible source has stated the following: At 1245 today, Friday, 24 February 1995, and while Mr. [Gilles Haine], second secretary at the French Embassy in Amman and his wife were in al-Mawjib area, he was attacked by two persons who were present in the same area. As a result of the attack, he sustained wounds and was taken to hospital for treatment.

The public security patrols in the area arrested the culprits and they are being interrogated.

Attack Said for Eating During Ramadan

JN2602134695 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 26 Feb 95 pp 1, 15

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A government source has ruled out the possibility that the attack against the second secretary at the French Embassy and his wife was on political ground. The source said that the incident occurred in a hilly area overlooking Wadi al-Mawjib from the Madaba side, where the second secretary and his wife stopped to rest and were having breakfast. Most likely, the source said, the incident was triggered by the fact that the diplomat and his wife were eating in public during Ramadan, an act which the two assailants considered to be provocative to their religious feelings. A police patrol happened to be passing by the area at the time of the incident and arrested the two assailants. [passage omitted]

Assailants Identified

JN2402180895 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Feb 95

[Report by Randah Habib in Amman]

[FBIS Translated Text] (Gilles Haine), second secretary at the French Embassy in Amman, was attacked by two religious men, one of them with a beard, in the Wadi al-Mawjib tourist area, south of Amman.

Security sources said the attack took place at noon today following a quarrel between the two assailants—Salim 'Abdallah and Ahmad Khalid Qasim—and the French diplomat, who was accompanied by his wife. The police intervened immediately to arrest them. One of the assailants fired a single bullet at (Gilles Haine), which entered at the left part of his chest and left from his right thigh. He was immediately taken to Ma'daba Hospital. Dr Ibrahim al-Khudur, who supervised his treatment, said the French diplomat is suffering from an internal

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hemorrhage. He was then flown by helicopter to al-Husayn Medical Center in Amman, where he underwent surgery. Medical sources said his condition is moderate.

Security agencies started investigating the incident.

Ambassador Says Attack 'Isolated Incident'

JN2602093395 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The attack against a French diplomat in southern Jordan on Friday [24 February] was an isolated incident and was not targeted against France or French interests in particular, French Ambassador Bernard Bajolet said Saturday.

Mr. Bajolet said "the Jordanian authorities are still investigating the motive behind it, but we have no reason to think the attack was targeted against the French."

Second secretary at the French Embassy Gilles Hein was shot and wounded by two men on Friday noon while on a visit in the south. Mr. Hein is now recovering at the al-Husayn Medical City. The two assailants, said to be from al-Karak, were immediately arrested after the attack, security sources said on Friday.

Mr. Hein was initially transferred to Ma'daba hospital and then flown by a helicopter to the al-Husayn Medical City.

The French ambassador said Mr. Hein was doing well.

The head of the Police Department, Lieutenant General 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Adwan, Saturday received in his office the patrol policemen who arrested the assailants. He presented patrolmen with medal recognition of the bravery and successful mission in arresting the assailants in a short period of time.

The French ambassador said the efforts exerted by the Jordanian authorities were exceptional.

"We express our full appreciation to and deep satisfaction with the extensive efforts and continuous support the Jordanian authorities and officials alike showed," said Mr. Bajolet. "We are thankful to all the attention and care we received at the highest level."

Attackers Wanted To 'Undermine' Tourism

JN2602085895 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A judicial source in Amman has stated that the two persons who opened fire on French diplomat Gilles Hein admitted they sought from their operation to undermine tourism in Jordan.

The source added that the investigation, so far, has led to the arrest of other persons suspected of being connected with the perpetrators of the attack. Primitive explosives were found in their possession.

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Al-Hirawi Asks U.S., Russia To End 'Tragedy' in South

NC2402185395 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1705 GMT 24 Feb 95

[Speech by President Ilyas al-Hirawi at the Iftar banquet in the Presidential Palace in B'abda on 24 February; broadcast in progress—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ...[passage omitted] Dear brothers, our concerns are not restricted to liberating our occupied land in the south and western al-Biqa'. With every step we take, we take care to maintain Arab dignity and the values of a just and comprehensive peace. We embarked on the negotiations in Madrid committed to solidarity with the brothers. While we were calling on the Arabs to protect inter-Arab reconciliation, we found Arab- Israeli reconciliation being speeded up. Through our program of cooperation and coordination with my brother President Hafiz al- Asad, we have proven that unilateral reconciliation agreements do not lead to a just and comprehensive peace and that there can be no such peace without the south, the western al-Biqa', and the Golan Heights. The actual situation in the region is this: While the parties to the unilateral peace agreements are exerting efforts to rescue their signatures, we are triumphing for a just and dignified peace.

Dear brothers, does insistence on shelling our villages in the south and western al-Biqa'; besieging the ports of Tyre and Sidon; arresting our sons; torturing them in the Israeli prisons; violating our sovereignty in a way that ignores any law, norm, or consideration; does all such insistence serve the cause of peace? What kind of peace is this that cannot be established except over the blood, livelihood, property, and dignity of the Lebanese? From Lebanon, we call on the cosponsors—the Americans and the Russians—Europe and the brothers, and friendly peace-loving countries to support us to stop the tragedy in the south and Western al-Biqa'. We cannot pay the price in both cases of the eruption of fighting and the crisis of peace. Implementation of Resolution 425 is the test for Israel's real intentions to establish a just and comprehensive peace. How can those who want peace refuse to implement international resolutions and sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty at a time when the whole world is seeking to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction?

We are not afraid of the difficulties and pressure on us. A just and comprehensive peace is our choice and option. The attempts to blackmail and lure us will not hold any water with us. Those among our sons who were fooled and had dealings with Israel quickly discovered that Israel used them as implements to accomplish its interests. As for us, so long as we remain committed to our rights, we remain the more deserving of the peace of the brave.

Dear brothers, while we bid Ramadan farewell, we welcome the Christian Lent. How great is this spiritual heritage when we derive inspiration from its values to serve Lebanon. Many happy returns for the 'Id, and long may you and Lebanon live.

Buwayz: Beirut To Maintain Negotiations Stand

NC2502075495 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] At a ceremony held by the Lebanon Youth Movement in Zuq Mikhayil yesterday, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said that the peace negotiations have been frozen because Israel failed to shake our constant principles or blackmail us and usurp our rights. He said that the rush by certain Arab countries to make peace with Israel has not enabled Israel to shake our constants or usurp our rights. Despite all forms of pressure being put on us, we are determined to read the political map of the region soundly and objectively. [passage omitted]

Al-Hariri Ends Damascus Visit, Notes Solidarity

NC2502175095 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has concluded a two-day visit to Damascus during which he consulted with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and other officials on developments in the peace process and the situation in the south.

Before returning to Beirut, Prime Minister al-Hariri said in a radio interview that the goal of Israel's aggressions is well-known; namely, to make Lebanon abandon its national and pan-Arab stances. He stressed that Lebanon will continue its coordination and solidarity with Syria. He noted that the main obstacle to peace lies in Israel's attempt to impose its will and terms for a settlement on all the parties to this settlement process, not just on Lebanon and Syria.

Prime Minister al-Hariri affirmed that Lebanon will not abandon its right to liberate its territories, regardless of the pressure, blockade, and aggressions.

Al-Hariri Reiterates Stance on Peace With Israel

NC2602104595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a fast-breaking banquet hosted by the graduates of al-Maqasid Charity Society at the Pristol Hotel in Beirut yesterday evening, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri stressed that we will not retreat one inch from the course we have chosen for peace. He emphasized that the links between the Lebanese and Syrian tracks will not break and will remain a guarantee of our right to liberate our land and regain our sovereignty. He said that Israel wants to dictate our national and pan-Arab options and to specify our behavior in a settlement as if it were the only custodian of peace. He said:

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[Begin al-Hariri recording] [passage omitted] This year, Israel unleashed a new cycle of violence and followed it with a naval blockade that is not only aimed at blocking the livelihood of hundreds of Lebanese families but also at confining Lebanese sovereignty with a series of military and security shackles. We now have two strips facing occupation, the land belt known as the border strip and the naval blockade that covers one-fourth of the Lebanese coast, from the port of Sidon to Tyre's port. From the Sfayr crime to the Kafr Rumman crime and the continual bombardment of Iqlim al- Tuffah, al-Nabatiyah, and western al-Biqa', Israel wants one thing: It wants Lebanon to submit to its will in the settlement. It wants Lebanon to abandon coordination and cooperation with Syria. To achieve this goal, it has already tried all forms of diplomatic terrorism against Lebanon but failed to reach its goal. Israel is encroaching on our land and sovereignty in an unprecedented way, right under the eyes and ears of all the nations and parties concerned with the cause of peace in the region. Israel aims to separate Lebanon from the fair course it has chosen in order to liberate its land and regain its sovereignty.

Brothers: I do not want to talk for the sake of talking or to use this occasion to declare enthusiastic stances. However, I want to emphasize simply and again that this Israeli style of pressuring Lebanon will be to no avail and that Israel—which we know can commit acts of aggression against Lebanon, and which is actually doing this daily—will not be able to bring Lebanon under the sway of its regional policies and hegemonistic plans. We say this despite the suffering, ordeals, and perils our people have encountered. [passage omitted]

Our homeland will not abandon its right to liberate its land, despite pressures, blockades, and aggression. Israel has used all forms of terrorism against Lebanon; and its government—both the prime minister and cabinet members—are terrorizing Lebanon as never before. We have received the message from our occupied land in Marj 'Uyun. We reject this message in advance by all means and standards of patriotism, sovereignty, independence, and freedom.

Israel wants to dictate to us our national and pan-Arab options. It wants to specify our behavior in a settlement as if it were the only custodian of peace. It wants to impose its conditions on us. Perhaps the dilemma plaguing the peace process lies in this point, that is, in what Israel wants and in what it is trying to impose on all parties to the settlement, not only on Lebanon and Syria.

We will not budge one inch from the course we have chosen for peace. The Syrian and Lebanese tracks will never diverge and this will remain the guarantor of our right to liberate our land and regain our sovereignty.

We have proceeded on the course of peace together with Damascus since the Madrid Conference and will continue to confront the challenges with it until we achieve the liberation of all south Lebanon, western al-Biqa', and the whole Golan Heights. We accept our responsibility to liberate our occupied land and will not abandon this responsibility. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Dallul Views Attacks, Denies Secret Talks

NC2602100595 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul, in al-Biqa' region, by Ramadan Husayn, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Husayn] Your Excellency, we wish to welcome you to the Voice of the Arabs. Good morning.

[Dallul] Good morning to you.

[Husayn] Minister, could you please brief us on the current situation in south Lebanon following the recent Israeli attacks?

[Dallul] Israel is waging extensive land and naval aggression against Lebanon. For the past few days it has been progressively escalating a naval siege of Tyre, Sidon, and al-Damur, which is only 10 km from Beirut. It has also bombarded villages and farms, destroying everything it could. This proves for the thousandth time that the Israeli entity, founded as it is on aggression, can never abandon its aggressive nature and embark on a period of peace. How else can one explain Israel's persistent attempts to divert attention from the stumbling Palestinian-Israeli negotiations? It tries to divert attention from this failure—actually from its refusal to implement the Oslo agreement—by escalating its assaults on Lebanese civilians, villages, crops, and even livestock. In reality, Israel is trying to cover up for the stumbling, confused negotiations with the Palestinians. It does this because it wants to continue rejecting the objective of peace and the prospect of a secure region. This is shown by its insistence on not becoming a Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty signatory. We are faced with very real Israeli aggression. We appeal to our Arab brothers and the international community to shoulder their responsibilities and deter Israel from its assaults and hostile intentions. Israel must stop manipulating the destiny of peace in this region to further its expansionist, hegemonic aims.

[Husayn] Minister, do you plan to take any specific measures against the Israeli aggression?

[Dallul] We will carry out a diplomatic, political campaign to explain the aims of this aggression. These aims are no secret but we wish to state our position for the record. We have made contacts with the UN Security Council's permanent members and we will also contact the nonpermanent members. Perhaps official Lebanese delegations will tour Arab and perhaps other countries to explain what is happening in Lebanon. We will call on the Arab foreign ministers to hold an emergency meeting and adopt a position on these attacks.

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[Husayn] Your Excellency Minister Dallul, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and 13 of his ministers recently entered south Lebanon and met with [South Lebanese Army Commander] Antoine Lahd. What does Beirut think of this action?

[Dallul] The visit was clearly intended to raise the morale of the collaborators who implement Israeli schemes against their own people. This is what Rabin and his ministers sought to do. We all know that Lahd's army, which collaborates with Israel, is experiencing an extensive state of collapse and confusion. There are deserters from all ranks of that army. This has disturbed and frightened the Israelis and made them hastily to come and try to raise the morale of Lahd and his collaborating group.

[Husayn] Mr. Minister, do you think Israel is now preparing for a large-scale military operation against the resistance in the south?

[Dallul] Israel is not perpetrating its aggressions against the resistance. The resistance is part of the Lebanese people, the civilian people. Israel is occupying our land. What is Israel doing on Lebanese territory? The resistance is the result of this occupation. Israel is perpetrating aggression against Lebanon, the civilians in Lebanon, the people of Lebanon.

[Husayn] During his recent visit to south Lebanon, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin stressed that his government is prepared to sign a peace agreement with Lebanon within nine months. What is Beirut's political reading of this statement?

[Dullul] This has a strange logic. Rabin visits those who cooperate with him against their own people and country, and he escalates military actions and tightens the blockade, preventing fishermen from making their living. And yet, he talks about peace. We and Israel are engaged in a negotiation process, and the negotiations are now suspended because of Israel's refusal to accept the logic of a just and comprehensive peace based on the exchange of land for peace. Israel wants peace and land at the same time. What is Israel doing on our land? If it claims that it agreed with the Palestinians on a solution to the Palestine problem—and the Arab- Israeli conflict originally stemmed from the Palestinian-Israeli conflict—then why is Israel keeping its army in the Golan, south Lebanon, and western al-Biqa'? How can the Israeli occupation of these territories be justified? We entered negotiations with Israel for specific reasons. It is impossible for us to depart from these objectives—namely, the Madrid conference statement and the UN Security Council resolutions. We do not want to hold negotiations secretly or under the table, but publicly. We said this before and we are still saying it.

[Husayn] Minister Muhsin Dallul, in his statements in south Lebanon, Rabin also touched on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks within the peace process, trying to give certain impressions about these tracks. My question is, did you plan carefully how to coordinate Syrian-Lebanese positions in the next stage?

[Dallul] We are in constant contact with sisterly Syria. We have ongoing coordination to unify the two negotiating tracks and keep them in the right direction. There is full coordination, and it is impossible for us to retract from this or separate the two tracks because we proceed on a sound principle and a sound policy to achieve our objective of a just and comprehensive peace.

[Husayn] Thank you Mr. Muhsin Dallul, Lebanese defense minister.

[Dallul] I thank you, wish you success, and hope that you will work to expose Israel's intentions and acts of aggression against civilians and innocent people in south Lebanon and western al-Biqa'.

Says Army Ready To Confront Attacks

NC2702070195 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has said that Israel is seeking to step up its land, air, and sea attacks on Lebanon in a bid to destroy Lebanon's infrastructure. The defense minister had the following to say:

[Begin recording] [Dallull] The Lebanese Army has adopted all the necessary measures to confront all contingencies. The Army is in a state of alert and is ready to confront any Israeli attacks in defense of the people and the homeland. We will stand fast and confront any attacks. The Army is fully prepared to carry out its task. All Lebanon will be behind the Army and anyone carrying arms to confront the aggression.

[Unidentified correspondent] Do you think that Israel will embark on a new operation in the south?

[Dallul] Regardless of the contingencies, we will be quite prepared to confront every Israeli attack. We will resist and we will stand fast. It should be understood that Israel will have to pay a very high price for any invasion against Lebanon. [end recording]

Nasrallah Threatens Israel on 'Jerusalem Day'

NC2502111395 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Italicized passages recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Millions of Muslims worldwide, particularly in Lebanon, Palestine, and Iran, responded yesterday to the call originally made by the late Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, to mark International Jerusalem Day. They organized massive ceremonies, demonstrations, and marches during which they reaffirmed their resolve to continue their jihad by all available means until the holy lands are liberated from the Zionist invaders. [passage omitted]

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During Lebanon's major ceremony on this occasion in Beirut, Hizballah Secretary General His Eminence Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah declared that we all have two sentiments in our hearts: the first is humiliation because the holy sanctuary of the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque are still in Jewish hands. He noted that despite the fact that the Arab and Islamic nation numbers 1.4 billion people, the Zionist entity is Judaizing Jerusalem and eliminating its Islamic landmarks from sight and hearing. He declared that the second sentiment is pride and joy resulting from the mujahidin's martyrdom operations in Jerusalem, Beit Lid, and Tel Aviv and also from the intifadah.

Nasrallah drew a parallel between the two Islamic occasions Laylat al-Qadr [Night of the Koran's Revelation] and Jerusalem Day, and praised the massive attendance by worshipers at Husaynite Shiite shrines and mosques where they pray for deliverance from global arrogance, notably the Great Satan. He pointed out that Jerusalem Day is a day of promise and revival because Jerusalem is the symbol of the cause and the byword for the struggle and battle.

[Nasrallah] *We meet here, all of us—people, resistance, Army, and state—to confront Israel's pressures, its naval blockade of us, and its daily assaults on the civilians in south Lebanon and the western al-Biqa'.*

I wish to remind you at this point that the Islamic Resistance still reserves its right to retaliate against the Jewish colonies in northern Palestine when our civilians are subjected to killing, bombardment, and the demolition of their homes. We reserve this right. We will exercise it when we want, not when the Israelis wish to lure us into battle at a time of their own choosing. It's we who will decide when we will exercise this right. We still reserve this right. Let not Rabin or Lahd [commander of South Lebanese Army] think that the Islamic Resistance will ever abandon its civilian kinfolk in the south and the western al-Biqa'.

The Hizballah's secretary general explained that Washington is making enormous efforts to salvage the political settlement since the negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track reached a deadlock and in the wake of the dispute over the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and the people's rejection of all humiliating agreements.

Nasrallah asserted that the United States has begun a multifaceted war against Islamic Iran on the political, media, and economic fronts. He said it has encouraged many hesitant ruling regimes to confront the Islamic reawakening, notably Yasir 'Arafat, who reached an impasse by his signing of the agreement with the usurping entity. He added that 'Arafat is being asked to wade through the mujahidin's blood as a condition for any progress in the negotiations, although he knows perfectly well that his involvement in such sedition will spell the end of his dream of being the mayor or mukhtar [derogatory description of 'Arafat as mayor of Gaza and Jericho, often used by Oslo Agreement opponents].

Secretary General Nasrallah warned the [Lebanese] authorities not to get trapped into confronting the resistance forces and the population in pursuit of the security guarantees that the U.S. Administration requires in return for lifting its travel ban to Lebanon. Nasrallah called for unity and said that the nation's enemies must not be given any chance to sow divisions.

His eminence said:

[Nasrallah] *We declare to the soul of the sanctified Imam Khomeyni, the soul of the lord of the Islamic Resistance martyrs Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, his wife and child [reference to former Hizballah leader killed during Israeli attack on his motorcade in south Lebanon in 1992], the soul of the lord of the martyrs Shaykh Raghib Harb, the souls of our great martyr mujahidin, our kinfolk and nation, our people in Palestine, and all our brother detainees in the occupation jails in Palestine and the al-Khiyam detention center who live in our hearts, minds, and souls, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim ['Ubayd, Hizballah figure detained in Israel] Shaykh Ahmad Yasin [jailed founder of Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas], all the prisoners from the ranks of our Lebanese and Palestinian people, the families of the martyrs and prisoners, all our wounded brothers, and all those who [words indistinct], that we will remain loyal on this Jerusalem Day to Jerusalem, Palestine, Islam, and the nation. As we were in the past and as we will ever remain, we are ready to become martyrs in this cause and forge the God-promised victory with our blood.*

Brothers, sisters, be assured that Israel will inevitably vanish. This is God's promise to the pious and the oppressed. Who among us would have thought it possible that we would ever see a world without a Soviet Union? We are now living in a world without a Soviet Union. Be confident that we are moving toward a world without an Israel. This will happen with God's promise, the martyrs' blood, the mujahidin's sweat, honorable people's steadfastness, and the sacrifices made by all the strugglers and loyal sons of this nation.

We ask God Almighty that future anniversaries of this day will see us living in dignity and without humiliation. We see this hope taking shape before our eyes. There is no room for pain.

In Tyre the citizens of the south responded to the call of Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, and participated in a Hizballah-organized ceremony marking International Jerusalem Day. [passage omitted]

His Eminence Shaykh Na'im Qasim, Hizballah deputy secretary general, delivered a speech on behalf of the Islamic Resistance in which he asserted that the United States is the symbol of terrorism in the world. He said: Here in Lebanon, the people are united around the resistance. Everyone can hear Lahd's and Rabin's screams, showing that they feel the painful impact of the resistance's blows. Shaykh Qasim added that security provided by political agreements is illusory and that the

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ruling regimes' normalization of ties with Israel is not shared by their populations. He affirmed that there will be neither security nor normalization with Israel, and declared that the land will continue to tremble under the feet of the Zionists.

[Qasim] *Today we are confronted by two conflicting trends: the first trend is that toward political settlement with its guns; the second trend is resistance by the mujahidin, who breathe life into the struggle with their blood and contributions. We no longer have just one option; we are faced with these two options. Doubtless the resistance option will triumph, God willing.*

We can draw the following moral from the near past. Have not they often tried to confront the resistance? Have they not tried to oppose the Islamic Resistance and all the honorable mujahidin? They tried to isolate the Islamic Resistance from the population and began spouting theories on how this isolation could be effected. Very soon afterwards, however, the Lebanese people—Muslims and Christians—rallied around the resistance and embraced it. The attempt at isolation failed. They attempted to use the label of "terrorism against terrorism," hoping that this rejected label would make the people afraid of the resistance and distance them from it. However, we witnessed the splendid sight of the people taking pride in the combative Islamic Resistance and yearning to be among its ranks, serve under its banner, and work alongside its mujahidin. They tried to restrict the scope of the resistance and impart to it a vicious sectarian character. The resistance, however, broke its chains like a genie coming of its bottle. Just as it offers the martyrs Haytham Sumum, al-Hassan, and Muhammad 'Aytani, it also offers the martyr Tony Abu-Mu'allim [a Christian name, implying Christian support] in the name of the Islamic Resistance. Thus, this resistance demonstrates that all of Lebanon and the entire region wish to be under this banner, which liberates man and territory.

At the conclusion of his speech, Shaykh Qasim saluted the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria for backing the resistance.

The Tyre ceremony ended with a burning of Zionist and U.S. flags by the people. [passage omitted]

Israeli Navy Reportedly Blockading Coastline

Blockade Extended to al-Damur

NC2502122195 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israel today expanded its blockade of Lebanese coasts. Some 17 days after the blockade on the Tyre port began and two days after the blockade against Sidon port, Israeli enemy gunboats today practiced terrorism against fishermen off the al-Damur coast, preventing them from fishing in the area and sending them back. [passage omitted]

'Could' Be Extended to Beirut

NC2702070595 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Voice of the South, the mouthpiece of Lahd forces [South Lebanese Army], has reported that the ongoing Israeli naval blockade, could possibly be extended to include Beirut Port.

Navy Expands Blockade

TA2702103095 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 27 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Aharon Klein]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israel Navy expanded its sea blockade of Lebanese ports yesterday. Military sources say that the blockade, which has now been in force for almost a week, is designed to prevent terrorist attacks from the sea against Israel as well as exert pressure on the Lebanese Government to ease the restrictions it has imposed against residents of the security zone in south Lebanon.

Numerous Israel Navy vessels are participating in the blockade, including missile boats and thew speedy Dvora coast guard patrol boats. According to a senior military source, the Israel Navy is engaged in widespread activity to hermetically seal off the Lebanese coast between the area south of Beirut and the international border at Rosh Haniqra. As part of this blockade, Israel Navy vessels are preventing local fishermen from leaving port waters and stopping boats and ships from entering the ports under siege.

The Israel Navy is also monitoring all the bays used by smugglers to carry out illegal trade between Lebanon and the outside world.

Over the past few days, many Lebanese fishermen have demanded compensation from the government in Beirut for the losses they have incurred as a result of the Israeli blockade.

Reportage on Activities in Southern Region

Israel Shells Areas

NC2502075295 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] As the Israeli blockade of the ports of Tyre and Sidon continues, the Israeli occupation forces have resumed bombardment of the Iqlim al-Tuffah area as of 0600 today, focusing on Jabal al-Rafi', al-Jabal al-Akhdar, al-Wadi al-Akhdar, the outskirts of 'Arab Salim, al-Luwayzah, Mlikh, the Mlita hills, Jabal Safi, and the outskirts of 'Ayn Bu Siwar. The Israeli artillery pounded the outskirts of Habbush, Kafr Rumman, Kafr Tibint, and the Lebanese army deserted barracks in al-Nabatiyah throughout the night and until 0500 today. The bombardment was accompanied by

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intensive machine-gun fire at the residential areas in Habbush and Kafr Rumman.

At 0100 today, two Israeli helicopters flew over the Iqlim al- Tuffah heights up to al-Shaqif Castle and al-Khardali Bridge, and strafed the woods of al-Jarmaq, al-'Ayshiyah, and al-Rayhan with heavy machine guns.

IDF Soldier Wounded; Lubrani on SLA Morale

TA2602061695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier was lightly to moderately injured during an operation in south Lebanon yesterday. The reason for the injury is now being investigated. The incident occurred in the western sector of the security zone. [passage omitted]

Navy sources confirmed yesterday that a limited blockade has been imposed on the ports of Tyre and Sidon. One of the questions facing Israel if and when a settlement is reached in south Lebanon is what will happen to the Lebanese population that helped Israel. And this is the question that Jack Katzenell put to government coordinator in south Lebanon Uri Lubrani.

[Begin recording] [Lubrani] There are ups and downs in the morale of the people who are defending the security zone. It has been like this for the last 10 years and I do not see at this point in time any change. There are good days, weeks, and months and there are bad months. They have casualties, morale is a bit lower. When they have successes, morale is a bit higher. I do not see any meaningful change in this except of course that there are many of them who are thinking about what is going to happen after we have a peace agreement with Lebanon. What is going to be their future? And I think that what the prime minister said is a telling response to their worries.

[Katzenell] What kind of assurances can Israel give them if it makes a treaty with Lebanon, and of course with Syria, which involves a withdrawal to the international boundary?

[Lubrani] Look, I am not trying to preempt, but I think the prime minister was quite clear in saying that we consider our relationship with the South Lebanese Army as a relationship of partners. They are blood brothers, and we will want to see that they will not be harassed or molested or penalized because of the fact that they were with us here defending the security of their own region and of the northern border. [end recording]

Shelling, Sorties, Blockade Continue

NC2602080495 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A great tension grips the villages in the south as the Israeli occupation forces continue their acts of aggression and naval blockade of the Lebanese coast from Tyre up to Sidon and al-Damur, preventing fishermen from fishing in Lebanese territorial waters.

From 2100 yesterday and until this morning, Israeli helicopters flew over several areas and raked the woods around the villages of al-'Izziyah, al-Hinniyah, al-Mansuri, Majdal Silm, Zun, and the adjacent valleys. The hostile helicopters fired flares over the line from al-Hamra' up to Haris and Haddatha. The Israeli ground forces continued their shelling yesterday as the enemy gunboats continue a stifling blockade along the Lebanese coast.

NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent Qasim Safa reports:

[Begin Safa recording] Israeli aggression against the south villages continued throughout last night. The Israeli enemy forces filled the inhabitants' night with fright, anxiety, and suspense. Israeli gunboats directed intensive and indiscriminate fire along the coast north of Tyre opposite the villages of 'Adlun, al-Saksakiyah, al-Sarafand, and Abu al-Aswad at 2100 yesterday, preventing fishermen from sailing off the shore. The Israeli gunboats did the same south of Tyre along the coast opposite the villages of al-Naqurah and al-Qulaylah. The Israeli gunboats are cruising off the Lebanese coast to implement the blockade.

Israeli helicopters flew over the villages of the western and central sectors all last night and until dawn today. They raked the woods and valleys adjacent to the villages of Majdal Zun, al-Mansuri, Zibqin, Kafra, Yatar, Haris, and Haddatha. This was accompanied by military aircraft sorties over the south.

The Israeli forces shelled the outskirts of Yatar and Kafra yesterday evening after the Lebanese resistance detonated an explosive device near the enemy positions in Rshaf. A short while before midnight last night, enemy positions in al-Qantarah fired 105-mm and 82-mm rounds on the al-Hujayr valley and the outskirts of Frun and al-Ghanduriyah. In addition, Israeli helicopters flew over the area and dropped flares. Muhammd Jawad Zahwi from Majdal Silm was seriously injured as the villages of Bra'shit, Shaqra, and Majdal Silm were raked after midnight last night. [end recording]

Further on Shelling, Sorties

NC2602125895 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli acts of aggression against the south have continued. At 0500 today, the Israeli artillery positions in the al-Zaffatah area shelled the al-Litani River basin from their positions in 'Alman and al-Shumariyah. At 0530, the Israeli position in al-Suwayda' launched an extensive operation with machine guns and rockets in the Sujud woods, Nab' al-Tasah, al-Wadi al-Akhdar, and the southern quarter of

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'Arab Salim. The villages of al-Mansuri, Majdal Zun, the Sribbin valley, and the outskirts of Haris came under artillery bombardment from the Israeli positions in al-Halazun at dawn today. Meanwhile, the Israeli gunboats continued to direct machine-gun fire toward the fishermen on the 'Adlun and Khayzaran shores throughout the night, and fired flares over the area, forcing the fishermen to keep away from the shore.

Israeli warplanes flew over the south, particularly over Kafra, Yatar, Humin, Haris, and Jibal al-Butm throughout the night. In addition, Israeli forces in Jabal Humayyid and Rshaf sporadically raked these villages with artillery and 12.7-mm machine-gun fire. The Israeli military aircraft this morning flew over the south up to Beirut.

According to security reports from Hasbayya this morning, Israel has brought 20 Merkava tanks and 20 M-113 troop carriers and a number of trucks laden with ammunition along with 300 personnel to Lebanese territory from the direction of the Metulla settlement in the past 24 hours. These forces were distributed on two axes: In the Marj 'Uyun area and on the hills overlooking al-Nabatiyah and opposite Iqlim al-Tuffah.

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Al-Asad, King Fahd Discuss Saudi-Yemeni Agreement

JN2602214195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad tonight held a telephone conversation with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia, custodian of the two holy mosques. They discussed the agreement reached between Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni Republic.

President al-Asad and King Fahd emphasized the need for Arab brotherhood and for resolving disputes in a spirit of Arab brotherliness and out of a pan-Arab sense of responsibility. They also stressed the need for determination to resolve these disputes.

The president congratulated the custodian of the two holy mosques on the agreement. President al-Asad also lauded the efforts made to reach an agreement to the dispute between the two fraternal countries.

President al-Asad also telephoned Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih tonight. They spoke about the agreement reached with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. President al-Asad said that Syria welcomes the agreement and the spirit that permeated the discussions that resulted in it.

The two presidents emphasized the importance of resolving Arab disputes in a spirit of Arab brotherliness and the eagerness to remove differences through fraternal talks and a sense of pan-Arab responsibility.

Al-Shar' Briefs People's Assembly on Peace, NPT

JN2602180795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The People's Assembly held a session this afternoon under Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah. Nabil al-Mallah, minister of state for People's Assembly affairs, attended the session. During the session, the assembly listened to a briefing by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on the latest Arab and international political developments.

Foreign Minister al-Shar' reiterated the constant principles of Syria's foreign policy, charted by President Hafiz al-Asad, on Arab and international developments. This policy has proven its credibility through foreseeing Arab and international developments, analyzing and dealing with these developments, and showing eagerness to preserve the higher interests of the Arab nation.

Al-Shar' added: For years, the Arab situation has been through several developments fraught with dangers. These developments are somewhat exceptional in that they are critical and difficult. After the October war, the forces of conspiracy, which were upset by the Arabs' victory and solidarity in the war, began to undermine Arab solidarity and strike at any possibility of unity in one trench. The deteriorating Arab situation is not new. It has taken a serious turn represented in negative aspects, adverse developments, and separate deals in spite of the attempts by Syria, under the leadership of President al-Asad, to maintain the minimum level of Arab solidarity.

Foreign Minister al-Shar' asserted that Syria, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, is doing all it can to preserve higher Arab interests, guarantee Arab rights, ensure the minimum level of Arab security, and achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region in accordance with UN resolutions and international legitimacy. Faced with these extremely sensitive and delicate Arab developments, he said, Syria has tried to enhance the image of the Arab situation through bilateral and multilateral contacts with the Arab brothers. Syria's attempts were crowned by the convening of the trilateral Alexandria summit. The importance of the summit stems from the fact that it revived the hopes of the Arab masses, restored a reasonable degree of Arab solidarity, and reasserted Syria's principled stands, especially since some people have deviated from the course of the peace process.

The foreign minister added: The summit was an attempt to correct the Arab situation after the deviations on the part of some people who did not fulfill their promises and pledges. Israel and those behind it were not happy with the summit. Therefore, Israel tried to abort its outcome and achieve more gains at the expense of the Arabs, their nation, independence, fate and true peace in the region.

The foreign minister further said that Israel was the party that introduced terrorism to the region when it started usurping Arab rights and territories in Palestine at the hands of specialized terrorist organizations. So far, Israel has not endorsed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] despite all the international pressures. All doors have been opened to Israel to enable it to acquire the most sophisticated technology. These doors have been closed in the face of the Arabs. Israel is now conducting a Western maneuver through which European nations are putting pressure on the Arab countries to renew the signing of the NPT. We in Syria will not sign the NPT again unless Israel signs it. We are now witnessing a form of the old colonialism by new methods.

Al-Shar' said the international situation is still bad. International changes have left many gaps in this situation, and there are still flash points in Bosnia-Herzegovina and other regions. The foreign minister reaffirmed Syria's principled and constant positions under the leadership of President al-Asad in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. This peace should be based on UN resolutions, international legitimacy, not relinquishing an iota of the homeland's soil, ensuring Arab rights and the future of the nation, and facing the challenges that seek to divide the Arabs and control the Arab region.

Afterward, a number of the members of the People's Assembly asked the foreign minister questions which he

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answered. Before that, the written questions of the members were read out and referred to the competent agencies through the cabinet. The session was adjourned to 1000 on Monday [27 February].

Radio: U.S. 'Credibility' Must Parallel 'Enthusiasm'

JN2502170595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1238 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Talk has increased about intensified U.S. efforts to end the deadlock in the peace process as a result of Israeli intransigence in rejecting the bases of a just and comprehensive peace.

Reports from Washington affirm that the U.S. Administration is determined to send its Secretary of State Warren Christopher on a new tour of the region. This comes as a sign of a new U.S. enthusiasm to show commitment—which the U.S. Administration continues to declare—toward achieving a just and comprehensive peace. Moreover, the U.S. Administration stressed that such peace will not be achieved without Syria and Lebanon.

Along with the enthusiasm the U.S. Administration is showing, there are some facts and questions about the nature of the obstacles that led to the deadlock in the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and to the failure to implement the Oslo accord, with all its flaws and shortcomings.

The peace process has been deadlocked for a long time. The United States knows this, and the reasons behind it. It refrains from specifying who is responsible for obstructing the peace process and for leading it to deadlock followed by serious stalemate, based on which Israel is almost succeeding in killing the peace opportunity—in which the international community saw hope in the possibility of achieving security and stability in the region.

We do not believe any observer of developments, or anyone who has followed the peace process since it was launched in Madrid, is unaware that the obstacles the peace process faces are Israeli obstacles and that the accompanying bloody events are Israeli-made and are characteristic of Israeli massacres, Israeli terrorism, and the continuous Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

Moreover, we do not believe the U.S. Administration is unaware of how many U.S. and non-U.S. rounds and efforts have been wasted because of the intransigent Israeli stand rejecting the resolutions of international legitimacy and the bases of the peace process, foremost of which is the land-for-peace principle, which was also the core of the U.S. initiative itself.

Besides, we do not believe the U.S. Administration is unaware of Syria's stand, which aspires to a just and comprehensive peace and responds to international legitimacy and the spirit of the U.S. initiative. Syria has not stopped reiterating that this stand rises up to the level of a strategic choice. Indeed, Syria is cooperating with and responding to U.S. efforts to achieve this strategic choice.

The United States is also aware that in its contacts on various levels Syria has demanded nothing but the implementation of international legitimacy's resolutions and the land-for-peace principle. When we talk about land, we are talking about all the occupied Arab territories, the Golan, southern Lebanon and about the removal of all the settlements and the withdrawal of settlers and occupation forces to the 4 June 1967 borders.

Moreover, we do not believe that any of those interested in achieving a just and comprehensive peace and security and stability in the region are unaware that a full Israeli withdrawal is the key to this.

We are not adding anything new when we say that a peace based on UN resolutions and founded on justice and comprehensiveness and on achieving right and maintaining the rights and dignity of all continues to be the desired peace. Syria is seeking to achieve this peace, especially after bitter experience has proved that partial and unequal agreements do not achieve peace, security, and stability. On the contrary, they further complicate the situation and drive away the opportunity for a real peace.

Syria—which truly responded to all international efforts and stressed its willingness to respond to whatever leads to a just and comprehensive peace that secures the full restoration of territories and rights—sees in the new U.S. efforts an opportunity to rescue the peace process from collapse. This is provided that these efforts are accompanied by a clear and practical commitment to fulfilling pledges and proving the credibility of U.S. obligations which, due to Israel's policy, are undergoing a difficult test.

Any move should not be an end in itself but a means to an end. A new move should carry something new that provides an opportunity to push the peace process forward with real momentum and that reaffirms its bases and requirements in harmony with international charters and the requirements of the United States' role as an effective, honest, and fair partner. This should place the peace process on its correct track and path toward achieving the desired objective, avoiding the foul play Israel is trying to cast around the peace efforts and talks.

Peace Process Said 'Standing on the Verge of Collapse'

JN2402155295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 24 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: It has been announced in Washington that Warren Christopher, U.S. secretary of state, is preparing to visit the Middle East in the first week of March in order to extricate the peace process from its current stalemate. The U.S. State Department spokesman warned in advance that Christopher's endeavors will face many hardships. The fact is that the peace process has not just stumbled, but it also seen noticeable regression and is threatened with collapse. During recent months, Israel unleashed aggressive and subversive schemes that, in essence, seek to undermine this process and cause the region to return to the atmosphere that prevailed before the American initiative.

No observer needs to make a thorough analysis; facts and events are clear and they call for pessimism. Although it has admitted that Syria is the basic partner in the peace process, Israel has failed to take a single step to advance the talks on the Syrian track. The Tel Aviv rulers have made successive statements about their determination not to withdraw completely from the Golan and their commitment to their unachievable conditions that prejudice Syria's sovereignty on its land.

Recently, Israel escalated its brutal acts of aggression against Lebanon. No town or village in southern Lebanon has been spared from its criminal shelling. This time it has gone as far as besieging Lebanese ports and preventing fishermen from earning their living. It has also brought to the occupied part of southern Lebanon more troops supported by long-range offensive weapons. This time, it seems as if it wants to inflame the region and deal the fatal and final blow to the future of peace.

Everyone knows that Israel's repeated, continuous acts of aggression are designed to undermine stability in Lebanon and pressure its government into disengaging its distinguished relationship with Syria and getting involved in a disgraceful and humiliating agreement like the Oslo agreement, which is now completely deadlocked. Although Israel's rulers openly admit the failure of this agreement and decline to go ahead in implementing its provisions—given that it has failed to secure the stability they seek—they do not refrain from seeking to drag Syria and Lebanon into similar deformed agreements for this simple reason: They do not want a just and comprehensive peace. For a just peace stemming from Security Council resolutions requires them to return all the occupied lands, acknowledge the rights of the Palestinian people, withdraw from all the Golan and southern Lebanon, and end their expansionist plans in the region.

If the Israeli rulers were, as they claim, really concerned about real peace—which alone leads to real security—they would have drawn lessons from the Oslo agreement. These lessons include the fact that peace and occupation can never coexist and that Israel's security can be only achieved through the acknowledgment of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, full withdrawal from all occupied territories, the full implementation of all international legitimacy resolutions, respect for UN principles and charters, and the abandonment of the policy based on the law of the jungle, confiscation of land, and the erection of settlements.

None of this has materialized. Israel has stepped up its pressure on the self-rule authority to wage war against its people and to play the same role in Gaza that the agent Lahd army plays in southern Lebanon. At the same time, Israel has avoided any peaceful commitment on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. It added insult to injury when it expressly rejected signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and subjecting its facilities to the supervision of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency. This aroused doubts on the part of all the region's Arab and Islamic countries alike. Israel is piling up nuclear weapons and at the same time spares no effort to pressure foreign countries into abstaining from supplying any Arab or Islamic country with defensive weapons.

The question is: Where does the peace process stand in light of all these aggressive practices? What is the future of the Security Council resolutions that were considered the basis of this process? Why have these resolutions not been implemented more than three years after the Madrid conference? Where are the commitments of the parties sponsoring the peace process to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of these resolutions? Why has a deaf ear been turned to Israel's practices and deliberate sabotaging of peace efforts? The entire process is standing on the verge of collapse.

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Afghanistan

Rabbani Conditions for Handover of Power Cited

LD2502114195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A spokesman for the president of Afghanistan has announced that President Borhanoddin Rabbani will not hand over power until he is reassured about the members of a UN-sponsored interim government.

Mahmoud Mestiri, the UN envoy for Afghan affairs, on Wednesday [22 February] quoted President Borhanoddin Rabbani as saying that he will step aside without any preconditions on 21 March.

Tehran TV Reports Reopening of Kabul Airport

LD2602164895 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The airport in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, has been reopened. Activity at the airport stopped 15 months ago, when the most severe civil war in that country started. Reports from Kabul also state that the forces of President Borhanoddin Rabbani and the Hezb-e Wahdat shelled each other's positions last night. No information is available about the damage or casualties caused by this exchange of fire.

In addition, the Taleban has warned that if Rabbani does not agree to transfer power peacefully, that Taleban group will capture Kabul.

Government Resumes Talks With Taleban

LD2702114395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources close to Afghanistan's Government announced: The representatives of Borhanoddin Rabbani have resumed new talks with the leaders of the Taleban group. The talks are continuing in the region of Chahar Asiab, which is under the control of Taleban.

The available reports from Kandahar and Ghazni indicate that Taleban groups have resorted to disarming forces affiliated with Jam'iyat-e Eslami Afghanistan [Islamic Society of Afghanistan] in the regions under their control. Taleban had previously promised to allow the forces of Jam'iyat-e Eslami to operate in the region under their control in return for Jam'iyat-e Eslami's cooperation in crushing the forces under the command of Hekmatyar, leader of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party].

Rabbani Forces Shell Wahdat Positions

LD2702105595 Tehran IRNA in English 0957 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb. 27, IRNA—Forces loyal to President Borhanoddin Rabbani heavily pounded positions of Hezb-e Wahdat [Islamic Unity Party] leaving at least nine persons dead and many injured Sunday, Afghan sources said here on Monday [27 February].

Rabbani forces shelled Wahdat positions in (Karte Seh), (Kote Sangi), Deh Mazang and (Karte Chahar) areas in the northwestern war-battered Kabul.

The Afghan sources told IRNA that fresh attacks by government forces on Wahdat positions were aimed at advancing their frontline in the face of Taleban threat to attack Kabul if its arsenal were not surrendered to them.

An Afghan religious students leader on Saturday warned of war in Afghan capital, ruled by Rabbani, if weapons were not handed over to them. "Fighting is inevitable if they block our (arms collection) process," Maulvi Rehmwtuliam was quoted as saying in Chahar Asiab, some 15 km from south of Kabul.

Taleban driven the forces of Hezb-e-Eslami [Islamic Party], the main Afghan opposition party, led by Golboddin Hekmatyar out of its headquarters, Chahar Asiab, early this month.

Taleban intend to disarm all Afghan groups including government forces but Rabbani's men led by his military commander Ahmed Shah Masoud refuse to give up security of Afghan capital to Taleban. The issue of security of Kabul was the main hurdle in the transfer of power in Afghanistan that has now been put off till March 21.

Rabbani, whose extended two year term in office ran out on December 28, was earlier scheduled to hand over power to U.N. posed 24-men interim council on February 20 last.

CIS Aircraft Bombard Darwaz District; 10 Killed

LD2402163895 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] CIS and Russian bomber aircraft carried out a barbaric air attack today on Darwaz District, Badakhshan Province.

Reports received by the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY from Badakhshan Province say that four Russian aircraft savagely bombarded the residential areas of Maye, Darwaz District, killing 10 innocent inhabitants of this area and injuring 24 people. Dozens of houses, inlcuding Qodrat High School, were destroyed.

According to another report, the Russian soldiers fired on Chashpak and Jamrak villages with tanks and heavy weapons. No report of losses is available.

The report adds that four innocent inhabitants of Chashpak village, who were on their way to the next village, were recently killed by heavy weapon fired by the Russian border force.

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India

22 Army Personnel Killed in Assam Explosion

BK2502091295 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Assam, 22 army personnel have been killed and 20 others injured in two bomb explosions in a coach of the Tinsukia Mail. The explosions took place early this morning near the outer signal of (Lailalong) Railway Station of the Dimapur-Lumding section. The coach in which the army jawans [personnel] were travelling immediately caught fire following the explosion.

The railway minister, Mr. C.K. Jaffar Shariff, who is in Bangalore, is flying to Guwahati to supervise the relief and rescue operations. He has expressed shock over the tragedy. Arrangements for ex gratia payments are being made.

'Shoot at Sight' Orders Issued for Bihar Election

BK2702103495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Bihar, shoot at sight orders have been issued in Palamau District against the extremists trying to disrupt the poll process. The district returning officer told our Ranchi correspondent that eight companies of paramilitary forces have been deployed in five Naxalite-prone constituencies. In a massive combing operation, 300 persons, including 25 hardcore Naxalites, have been arrested in the district.

Second Phase of Elections Begins in Gujarat

BK2502100995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Gujarat, the second and final phase of polling in 86 constituencies spread over nine districts has begun. Our Rajkot correspondent after visiting several polling stations in Junagadh District reports that people braving chilly weather are queuing up in front of polling booths since early morning. Old men and women outnumber others in front of polling booths in rural areas. Elaborate arrangements have been made for the smooth conduct of the elections. One hundred and twenty five companies of paramilitary forces besides the state reserve police and the home guards have been deployed. One thousand one hundred and forty eight candidates are contesting in today's elections. Repolling in two polling booths of Shehra and one booth in Sidhpur is also being held today.

The Congress-I is contesting 85 seats, while the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has put up candidates in all the 86 constituencies. The Janata Dal is contesting for 51 seats, BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party] 52, Doordarshia Party 80, RPI [Republican Party of India] 50, and SJP [Samajwadi Janata Party] eight. Other parties have fielded 33 candidates. Seven hundred and thirty eight Independents are also in the race.

'Heavy Polling' Reported

BK2502161095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Around 60 percent polling is reported in the second phase of assembly elections in 86 constituencies in Gujarat today. The chief electoral officer, Mr. G. Subharao, told our Ahmadabad correspondent that according to preliminary reports rural areas witnessed heavy polling. The highest voter turnout was in Khera District. Polling was peaceful barring a few incidents of violence and impersonation. Two stabbing incidents were reported in Kodinar and Nadiad. An agency report says that voters of (Kutchsupa) village in Bulsar District boycotted the polling to express their resentment over the lack of civic amenities. One thousand one hundred and forty eight candidates, including 49 women, were in the fray. Repolling in two polling booths of Shehra and one booth in Sidhpur was also held today. In the first phase of polling in 96 constituencies in Monday [20 February] 65 percent voters had exercised their franchise.

Congress-I Ministry 'Sworn In' in Manipur

BK2502134495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0930 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Manipur, a three-member Congress-I ministry headed by Mr. Rishang Keishing, has been sworn in. The two other cabinet ministers are Mr. Radha Binod Koijam and Mr. T. Birendra Singh. The governor, Mr. O.N. Shrivastava, administered their oath of office at Imphal this afternoon. Immediately after the swearing in, Mr. Rishang Keishing, told our correspondent that he will prove his majority on the floor of the assembly within 30 days as advised by the governor. The chief minister claimed that he enjoys the support of the 31 MLA's [members of legislative assembly] in the assembly which has an effective strength of 59. He said the ministry will be expanded in the first week of next month. The Congress-I emerged as the single largest party with 21 seats in the recently concluded assembly elections.

Editorial Views Election Outcome

BK2502120995 Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 23 Feb 95 p 6

[Editorial: "A Mixed Message"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The purpose for which the Congress Party withdrew presidential rule in Manipur just before the state assembly elections and formed a Congress government under the leadership of Rishang Keishing could not be achieved. Though Mr. Keishing won his own election, many Congress ministers lost and the Congress failed to come close to winning the majority

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in the assembly. Still, the Congress leads in the tally of seats won. The Manipur People's Party is close behind and striving to form a government in alliance with four small parties. The election results indicate that the two main parties will have to seek help from the minor parties—spread like smaller coins in the tally—to form a government. The question is: Despite the heavy polling in Manipur, why was a clear public mandate not obtained? Perhaps the reason lies in the state's political history. In Manipur, party allegiance has always been quite shallow and legislators have frequently changed party affiliation and camp. The policies and attitudes of the political parties never define their differences clearly enough to help voters choose among any of them. Moreover, the Congress and the Manipur People's Party have both been victims of internal bickering. Rebellions groups have often deserted their parties and brought down the governments formed by their parent parties.

Now it appears as if the Manipur People's Party will succeed in forming a government by collecting the rebels around an anti-Congress axis, although nothing can be predicted about the stability of such a government. Last time the Congress emerged as the single largest elected party, but the non-Congress parties formed a united group, thus enabling the Manipur People's Party to form a government on the strength of only 13 elected members. This government could not survive, however, and the Congress succeeded in seizing power by sowing the seeds of dissension within the Manipur People's Party. The last assembly proved to be such an arena of manipulation and political wrangling that its five-year term saw three governments formed and presidential rule declared twice. Added to this scenario of extreme instability was a novel chapter by Mr. Barhbabu Singh, who was elected to the assembly on the Manipur People's Party ticket and became its chairman. Ignoring the Supreme Court through his reckless and whimsical decisions, he did not allow the Congress governments a moment of relief.

This political instability had not only cast an adverse shadow over the administration, it also allowed the terrorists of the PLA [People's Liberation Army] and the National Socialist Council to grow progressively more audacious. There have been frequent clashes between the Nagas and the Kukis and the PLA terrorists have launched many deadly assaults on the security forces over the last few years. The fear of violence gripping the state can be fairly judged by these violent clashes. The standing charge is that there are certain elements within the state administration as well as the government that patronize the terrorists. As a result of the frequent intervention of these elements, not only is the Army growing weary of fighting the menace of terrorism but even the previous governor thought it prudent to resign and leave the state. Nevertheless, this mixed message from the voters must be converted into the formation of a workable government as soon as possible. The leaders in Delhi should not complicate the situation in the state through their political maneuvering.

Hyderabad Reactor Begins Using Uranium From China

BK2502085995 Madras BUSINESS LINE in English 20 Feb 95 p 9

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Hyderabad-based Nuclear Fuel Complex has begun processing the low enriched uranium supplied recently to India by China. The first batch of fuel tubes containing the enriched uranium will shortly be supplied to the Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) in Rajasthan, sources from the Department of Atomic Energy [DAE] told Business Line.

China had, in late-December, landed the first instalment of uranium hexaflouride (UF6) grade enriched uranium, necessary to run the two 160 MWe [megawatts electric] boiling water reactors at TAPS.

The arrival of the Chinese enriched uranium would not have been better timed, because the Tarapur plants were, as late as January, being fuelled by residual enriched uranium from France.

France had withdrawn supplies altogether by the end of 1993, citing India's refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). Since then, the NFC had been feeding fuel assembly rods to the TAPS, using whatever was remaining from the French enriched uranium stocks.

Though the quantum of low enriched uranium received from China was not revealed, DAE sources maintained that it was sufficient for sustaining both the units of TAPS at least until the year 2000. The NFC is involved in treating the imported UF6 through the hydrolysis process and its subsequent reduction to pure, nuclear-grade uranium dioxide powder. This powder is further processed to dense pellets which are then encapsulated in Zircalloy tubes, fabricated inside the complex.

The fuel bundles for these boiling water reactors consist of 36 pins of about four-metre length compared to pins of 500 mm length used for pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWR).

Of the currently operational 10 atomic power plants in India, the Tarapur plant is the only boiling water reactor, while the rest are either PHWR or fast breeder type reactors (FBTR).

The supply of enriched uranium has been a controversial issue for nearly two decades now. The US, which had helped build the TAPS units through the General Electric Corporation, also signed a 30-year contract with India for the provision of fuel. However, it withdrew soon after India conducted its peaceful nuclear explosion in Pokhran in 1974.

The difficulty to obtain enriched uranium dragged on for nearly a decade before France entered the picture and supplied the starving atomic units with the fuel sometime in 1984.

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The hardening of the US stand in recent imes also forced the DAE to explore its own neans of running the TAPS as well as looking out for other suppliers. China entered the scene during 1994.

The former Chairman of DAE, Dr. Raja Ramanna, describing the tough stance of the US in an article co-authored with Ms. Deepa Ollapally, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Swarthmore, US, says the refusal of the US to grant permission to even reprocess plutonium in Tarapur is resulting in accumulation of large quantities of unprocessed plutonium which goes against safety regulations stipulated by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Though the Tarapur reactor falls under the purview of the IAEA, under the long-term agreement, India had to obtain permission from the US for reprocessing of its plutonium, even if it was recycled for use in the same reactor.

The international pressures have been increasing after DAE scientists succeeded in fabricating a mixed fuel (MOX) using plutonium as an alternative fuel for power reactors.

This development catapulted India into the select band of advanced nations to acquire the capability.

Scientists at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) also studied the possibility of utilising MOX as an alternative fuel for TAPS. However, with the arrival of the Chinese uranium, the necessity has been avoided for some years to come, sources said.

Commentary: Fissile Material Matter 'Exaggerated'

BK2402104495 Delhi THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 24 Feb 95 p 12

[Commentary by Aabha Dixit: "Examining Fissile Material Controversy"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. assistant secretary of state for south Asia, Ms Robin Raphel, recently sparked off yet another controversy about New Delhi's nuclear weapons option. Some suggested that singing a bilateral fissile cut-off treaty would be tantamount to signing the NPT through the back door. Even though the media has been examining Ms Raphel's statements as part of a worst-case scenario, the recent controversy is unduly exagerated.

Ms Raphel's testimony before a House sub-committee on Asia and the Pacific did not merely deal with the Clinton administration's strategy to draw India and Pakistan into the nuclear nonproliferation net. It also attempted to highlight the administration's position on several issues in south Asia including Kashmiri militants. In the course of her testimony, Ms Raphel patronisingly revealed that there was a suggestion emanating from Washington that the two countries sign a bilateral fissile cut-off treaty, prior to an international convention on the prohibition of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. The suggestion, however, does not specifically take into account safeguards for the plutonium produced so far by both countries, which should de-bunk the theory about the foreclosure of the Indian nuclear option. The Raphel proposal is at best an unofficial suggestion made by the Clinton administration. But, even that has been categorically rejected by New Delhi.

Significant Resolution

Many claim that signing a bilateral deal with Pakistan on a fissile cut-off is analogous to giving up the nuclear option. But it must be remembered that New Delhi is committed to an international convention, to be negotiated at a multilateral disarmament forum, and which seeks guidance from the resolution the U.N. General Assembly adopted at its 48th session in 1993. The resolution, co-sponsored by India, U.S., Canada and many other countries was significant because it contained an implied prospective effect clause for prohibiting production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The resolution was a major diplomatic disarmament achievement for India, which had, as early as 1954, been conscious of the impetus that the production of fissile material provided to the nuclear arms race. In 1982, Indira Gandhi's message to the second special session of the U.N. General Assembly devoted to disarmament, listed a five-point disarmament agenda for the international community's consideration. This included a call to cease production of fissile material. Even the 1988 action plan presented by Rajiv Gandhi expressly referred to a cut-off convention.

Therefore, the decision to go ahead and co-sponsor the cut-off convention resoslution at the U.N. General Assembly was entirely in keeping with India's long-standing policy of signing any disarmament treaty that is multilaterally negotiated, universal in application, non-discriminatory in character, comprehensive in scope and backed by a stringent verification regime. Together with the decision to give a political thrust to negotiations at the conference on disarmament in Geneva, there were two elements of the international disarmament agenda where the interests of New Delhi and Washington converged. Both countries were aware of this when they stressed the growing commonality between them.

Therefore, Ms Raphel's suggestion that India and Pakistan sign a bilateral cut-off convention, does not oblige New Delhi to accept the same. New Delhi has always rejected a narrow regional or bilateral approach on nuclear disarmament issues and it is unlikely that this position will change merely because of this suggestion. The 3 + 2 proposals by Washington and Islamabad have been rejected on the same grounds.' The critical question before New Delhi is not whether the option must be retained at all costs, but to ensure that it takes necessary

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security-related steps whilst maintaining its commitment to nuclear disarmament, which has to be achieved globally and on a non-discriminatory basis.

It is also important to realise that Ms Raphel's testimony was basically rhetorical. The U.S. has only a remote chance of securing overwhelming majority support for an indefinite and unconditional extension of the treaty. In what seems like a last ditch but high- profile effort to lure recalcitrant states to vote for the U.S. position in New York in April 1995, the Clinton administration has been actively seeking to play to the gallery as regards the dangers of nuclear proliferation. As part of this policy, countries like Iran, which are party to the NPT but which the U.S. deems suspect, have been unjustly targeted for increased international attention. At another level, the Clinton administration has thrown its weight behind the move for indefinite and unconditional extension and in doing so has tried to use western coalition partners to exert influence upon NPT member-sates and nonstates parties alike, to universalise and extend the treaty.

As it was not party to the NPT India was expected to play a lowkey role and benignly oppose extension. But in recent weeks, the U.S. has perceived that New Delhi has been giving coherent form to the developing world's views on the treaty. Even the presence of former foreign secretary, Mr M.K. Rasgotra, albeit as an NGO representing the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, may not have gone down well with Washington. At earlier review conferences there was no NGO representation from India, particularly one which had such close links with the Indian government. Thus, the Raphel reference to a bilateral deal on a fissile cut-off convention between India and Pakistan needs to be viewed as an attempt to exert counter-pressure on India.

But such attempts by the Clinton administration to link the issue of New Delhi's benign opposition to the NPT and the bilateral fissile cut-off proposal, place no obligation upon India to accept either the linkage or the proposal. New Delhi's opposition to the NPT is well-known and the West knows that it will not sign the treaty in its present form. Similarly, the bilateral and even the possibly unilateral element in the proposal has been rejected on principle. The grounds are that the matter requires concerted international action, for which a mandate exists in the form of the U.N. General Assembly resolution.

Onus On Islamabad

The Raphel proposal in fact, places the onus on Islamabad, which was recently desperately seeking to build up a plutonium stock pile. It sought to do this both by the smuggling route and the setting up of a plutonium enrichment facislity, which would give it bargaining power vis-a-vis India. A bilateral cut-off would actually stymie Pakistan's attempts to build a fissile stockpile. But New Delhi's commitment to seeking the prohibition of a fissile cut-off convention at the global level might provide Pakistan some relief in a tight situaiton. However, the Raphel suggestion could be modified by New Delhi while proposing declaratory confidence-building measures (CBM) to Islamabad on the lines of the chemical weapons convention CBM both countries adopted in 1991.

New Delhi could propose a fissile cut-off CBM that would commit both India and Pakistan to signing the multilaterally negotiated International Convention of the Prohibition of the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. While the Indian media needs to guard against U.S. moves that would affect the national interest, there is little need to rake up unnecessary controversy.

Minister Says Exports To Reach $25 Billion in 1995

BK2502091095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The commerce minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram, has expressed the hope that the country's exports will touch $25 billion this year. Addressing a meeting in New Delhi, he said India's exports during the first nine months have gone up by 16.8 percent. Reiterating the government's commitment to boosting exports, Mr. Chidambaram indicated that necessary changes will be made in the export-import policy which will be effective from 1 April this year. Participating in the meeting, several members of the Board of Trade suggested better coordination among various government agencies on policy issues. They also wanted marketing research in various countries to tap export potential.

Iran

Thirteen People Reported Killed in Mosque 'Stampede'

NC2402173595 Paris AFP in English 1726 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 24 (AFP)—Thirteen people were killed and 34 others injured during a stampede Friday [24 February] at a mosque in Rasht, northwest Iran, Tehran Radio said.

All the casualties were women and children, the radio said.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani's First Friday Prayers Sermon

LD2402154195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1130 GMT 24 Feb 95

[First Friday prayers sermon by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in Tehran on 24 February—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] A terrible thing happening today under the guise of propagating peace and protecting regional tranquillity and reforming global and regional relations is this same

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sinister event on the basis of which they [world arrogance] intend to formalize this refugeeship of Palestinians and give legitimacy to those who have arrived in the region through usurpation of the Palestinian territories. [passage omitted]

The Islamic Iran, which does not accept this unlawful act, is subjected to the most cowardly of treatments. I do not wish to elaborate on this matter as you yourselves hear about such cases every day. They accuse Iran of opposing peace. We oppose what is peace only by name. Our principle complaint is of the Arab countries and our Arab brothers. All those Arab countries with such population, with such huge resources of wealth, with such a vast market that constitutes a significant weapon for dealing with various issues, with such strategic and sensitive land, with such a good language and rich Islamic culture and literature connecting them all together, are indeed showing how incompetent they are in the face of the ongoing pressure. What would happen if you say no as we did? Now we are not dealing with the issue of war and strong battles. Now the issue is of a political debate in different societies.

Those propagating peace with Israel would like to think that they are engaged in a humanitarian act, but we know that this is not a humanitarian act. Therefore why should we not speak out? Why should we not say that it is not a humanitarian act just to pave the way for it? Even if you do not dare to speak out, at least do not say yes. Silence is also an option in this world. You can keep silent and others will speak out about the matter. Of course we do not approve of that, but they can at least show that much consideration. Very well, the consequences of such actions are that a number of struggling Muslim mojaheds have to resort to such self-sacrificing operations on their own to convey their message to the world. [Crowd chants support for Khamene'i and the Islamic revolution and condemns the United States and Israel]

Under these conditions we see that Islam's power is paradoxically directed at the service of those running the scene of the issue of Palestine, this calamity of the century, this blatant oppression.

The rights of a people that have clearly been usurped are going unnoticed. And anyone who opposes this trend is tainted with being against peace and tranquillity or supporting terrorism and adventurism. This deviation and unjust historical distortion is taking place during the age of communication and in a world that apparently defends human rights; under circumstances when peoples forgotten by history are lifting their heads out of the ruins of their countries, regrouping and restating their characters, and identities. Countries that were swallowed 80 years ago by Marxist materialism have been rejuvenated today and the people have reclaimed their mosques. Today we see that a living, aware, struggling, and oppressed nation, who are on the scene, are today being suppressed to this extent.

It is not a small matter that 4 million Palestinian refugees are scattered around the world, some even living in tents, with the money given to them as charity by the the United Nations and others, while their own rich lands have been given to a group of immigrants who are recruited from across the world to travel to that area and have the opportunity to work on the lands and live in the homes that once belonged to these refugees.

These liars and these so-called defenders of human rights call such a process peace, but they level different accusations against us just because we say this is not peace. Just because we say this process is unjust and tyrannical. This really shows what a wrong path the world is traversing on and how illogical and uncalculated some utterances are.

Their fundamental mistake is that they see this process as peace. This is what I wanted to get at when I started offering my earlier explanations.

You are wrong to consider this as peace. This is just like placing a layer of ash over a fire, which will only be rekindled again when the wind blows. If you are really interested in resolving the Palestine issue and bringing calm and tranquillity to the area, and if you truthfully think that calm and stability should prevail in areas adjacent to the world's energy reserves, then you should try to address the root of the problem.

You accuse some people of intending to throw the Jews into the sea—this is something that was said at one time. Who wants to throw them into the sea? These people are merely saying that the Palestinians should be allowed to return to their homeland, and if there is still some space left, then they can stay too [agar jaii bud digar in ham mimuneh]. This logic is altogether different to throwing people in the sea. Very well, if there is sea on one side and if they have to go into the sea on their way out, then they can leave from the other side that is over land.

The issue here is to do with the rights of the people and the return of the refugees. However, this strange sophistry of theirs, who fabricate a false historical right for a group of people, is not really creating peace in the area. Instead it is more like placing a powder keg in the region region, and only God knows how far the reverberations of this explosion will be felt.

Well, Israel is never going to be content. At a time whenthe PLO is begging for peace, and at a time when the Nuclear-Non Proliferation Treaty is being renewed, the United States is saying let Israel have nuclear weapons but Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, or Iran cannot have them. What kind of talk is this? How civilized are you? How much do you believe in logic? To what extent do you want the people to accept your words? How can there be a nuclear weapon there? A place under these conditions, a place to which 4 million refugees are looking, this is not a safe area! In whose hands do you want the nuclear weapon? And you are giving it to them! You accept this, but you oppose others if they have long-range guns.

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Do not impose this unfair lifestyle, and understand that there will be no peace on this path. Take Iran's well-intentioned words seriously. It is not a bunch of fanatical terrorists here talking to you. The same people are talking to you who history has shown even in Palestine undertook the most fair path. These are the same people who undertook the revolution with the Koran, which is based on mercy and kindness. Do not deal with the major and most important issue facing the world in this way.

Of course, we know this is how it looks on the surface. We know what you want Israel for, we know what you are after. Israel is an arrogant, colonial base for the oppression of Muslims, so that they do not threaten your colonial interests. Your aims are clear, and there is no one that does not understand this. The people understand this despite the great amount of misleading propaganda. [passage omitted]

Rafsanjani Delivers Second Sermon

LD2402171395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1130 GMT 24 Feb 95

[Second Friday prayers sermon by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in Tehran on 24 February—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] Another issue is regulation of the market, which itself requires a sermon, but we have no time for that today because our community expects to hear something about market regulation. [sentence as heard] We have had several sermons on that in the past and some unfinished talks. I will talk about it only briefly. God willing, I will explain more in later talks.

As I told you here before, we have planned and have taken the first steps. We are drawing up the plan from several axes. First, we categorized the goods as necessary and crucial ones. We have fixed the price of one type of goods; by one type I mean one series of necessary goods. It is intended that, God willing, those goods will be available and plentiful at the same fixed price, which is maintained by government subsidy. Fortunately, we have had good experience regarding them. On the whole, they are raw materials, foodstuffs, and medicine for the people.

The second series has been determined. They are goods that affect the people's lives from the point of the view of household commodities. Their prices are to be announced after 4 April. This date has been chosen so that the price of fuel can also be included. Fuel prices are supposed to change between the end of the year [20 March] and the beginning of next year. Specific prices are intended to be announced which will comprise more than 60 percent of household commodities. God willing, we will have those fixed prices next year as well as the fines concerning price violation for the people.

There is a series of goods which is not considered of much importance to day to day living. These have been regulated under a different system. Simultaneous to that is the supermarket program so that these kinds of stores become extensively available for the people in appropriate areas. God willing, you will see the first of these shortly. They will be expanded gradually. I hope to be able to elaborate on that program in my later talks. Of course, there is some cowardly resistance to this program. Our foreign enemies and domestic speculators who do not regard the program as appropriate for themselves are launching attacks elsewhere in order to upset the balance. We will have such nuisances but those are desperate acts which will come about gradually and must be resisted gradually. I ask our people to have a spirit of cooperation and try to cooperate with those officials who must carry out these tasks so that we can properly manage the hard task of the fight against the greedy and the profiteers. That is a relatively long-term program, and you must not expect everything to fall into place in two or three months. But I hope that within the one or two years when the program is completed we can have a proper distribution program alongside our production. God willing, the action will continue. [passage omitted]

Russian Foreign Minister Meets With Officials

'Moscow Will Not Yield' on Ties

LD2502151295 Tehran IRNA in English 1449 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 25, IRNA—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said in a message to his Iranian counterpart, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, on Saturday [25 February] that Moscow would not yield to the wish of the big powers on issues pertaining to mutual relations with Tehran.

In the message submitted by the visiting Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgiy Mamedov, Kozyrev emphasized that the two countries nuclear cooperation was for peaceful use of energy. The Iran-Russia nuclear cooperation is under the inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Kozyrev said in his message that certain powers, through their policies, were supporting injustice in the world and that the independent states would react because there was nothing more significant than "national sovereignty and freedom."

Mamedov described Tehran-Moscow policies in the field of nuclear non-proliferation as coordinated. He also said the current injustice regarding nuclear technology should be removed. He extended Kozyrev's invitation to his Iranian counterpart to visit Moscow.

Velayati said the Islamic Republic of Iran advocated non-proliferation of nuclear arms. He said Tehran believed in extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation

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Treaty (NPT) and that it should be observed indiscriminately throughout the world. The clear example of the discrimination of the treaty was the Zionist regime that possessed full nuclear arsenals, Velayati regretted.

The NPT is due to be extended next April.

Velayati said Russia as a big state and having access to nuclear energy, should follow an indiscriminate policy in signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty in order to prevent the non-signatory states from jeopardizing the security of other nations.

Velayati appreciated the Russian stance in peaceful application of nuclear energy under the inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). He also accepted his counterpart's invitation to visit Moscow.

Russia's Mamedov on 'Foreign Pressure'

LD2602114395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian deputy foreign minister and Iran's deputy head of the Majles foreign policy commission met and called for the expansion of relations in the fields of economics, politics, and science.

In this meeting, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgiy Mamedov stressed the importance of bilateral relations and said his country would not accept foreign pressure aiming to end these cooperations.

He said the Russian Government felt its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran were of great significance and it wished for their strengthening.

The Russian deputy foreign minster said cooperation should increase between the two countries to strengthen world and regional stability and peace.

Referring to the nuclear weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty he said Russia believed that countries that did not have nuclear weapons should have the right to use this technology for peaceful purposes.

In turn Mr. Mohammad Javad Larijani, deputy head of the Majles foreign policy commission, spoke about the control of atomic weapons and the nuclear weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty and said that the treaty would be reasonable only if it aimed at the destruction of all nuclear weapons across the world, but unfortunately no action has been pursued toward this aim.

Emphasizing the need to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, he said that contrary to the principles of the treaty the West and America are sparing no effort in arming Israel with nuclear weapons.

Mr. Larijani said the two main aims of the treaty were nuclear disarmament and provision of the possibility of peaceful use of technology.

Finally he emphasized the need for cooperation between the two countries on international issues.

Nuclear Cooperation Discussed

LD2602163595 Tehran IRNA in English 1540 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 26, IRNA—The Russian deputy foreign minister, Geogry Mamedov in a meeting with his Iranian counterpart, Mahmud Va'ezi, here Saturday [25 February], discussed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty [NPT], which is due to be expired in April.

Underlining the Russian Government's stance on the NPT, Mamedov said Iran and Russia have similar points of view on the issue. He expressed hope that Tehran and Moscow will continue their cooperation in this area.

Iran's nuclear activites are peaceful and no threat to international security, Mamedov added.

He said the Russian Government has reminded the Americans who object to Moscow-Tehran's nuclear cooperation, that Iran's nuclear progaram is peaceful.

Mamedov stressed that Russia's foreign policy is independent and that Moscow would not yield to any foreign pressure on issues pertaining to nuclear cooperation with Iran.

Referring to Iran's commitment to Non-proliferation Treaty, Va'ezi underlined that special attention should be paid to principal aims of the treaty which are nuclear disarmament and facilitating peaceful use of nuclear energy for member countries.

Nuclear disarmament has not been fulfilled by nuclear powers, for some countries have gained nuclear weapons which are a serious threat to international security, he added.

Va'ezi noted that Israel's nuclear weapons have endangered regional peace and stability and there should be a program to control its activities.

Mamedov, Va'ezi Give News Conference

LD2602192795 Tehran IRNA in English 1823 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 26, IRNA—The Russian deputy foreign minister, Georgiy Mamedov says his country "is determined to continue its nuclear cooperation with Iran, despite U.S. pressures."

Speaking at a press conference, also attended by Tehran-based foreign journalists, the Russian official said, "Russia is not a colony. It is an independent state and its decisions will be on the basis of its national interests."

During the interview, also attended by his Iranian counterpart, Mahmud Va'ezi, Mamedov accused Washington of using the "foreign aid" factor as a pressure lever against Moscow.

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"We believe that after the Cold War, all the countries can play a decisive role in settling international issues," he said. "The cooperation between Iran and Russia, too, is to serve the cause of international peace and stability, and is no threat against anyone."

Mamedov said Russia was interested in promotion of friendly relations with Iran because the two countries are situated in a sensitive region.

The Russian deputy foreign minister termed his negotiations with Iranian officials as satisfactory and said the two states hold common views on bilateral, regional and international issues.

He said Iran and Russia enjoy good grounds and high potentials for joint cooperation and that tensions in the region necessitate expansion of relations and cooperation between the two neighbours.

Mamedov rejected the report that Moscow has forced Tehran to accept unconditionally the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and emphasized that the two states have common views towards the treaty.

NPT is due to be extended by the signatories of the treaty in New York next April.

On the Tajik peace talks, Mamedov said Russia on its part was making efforts to help restore peace in the Central Asian republic.

He said Russia appreciates Iranian peace efforts in Tajikistan and hoped that other states in the region that are interested in resolving the tajik Crisis would cooperate in this regard.

The Russian official said Moscow and Washington had failed to settle world issues over the past 25 years and that the time has come for both the small and big powers to play their decisive role in settlement of international issues.

Iranian deputy foreign minister, Mahmud Va'ezi, who was present in the press conference described Mamedov's visit to Tehran as positive.

He said cooperation between Iran and Russia would not jeopardize peace and security in the region and that the agreement signed between Iran and Russia was in line with Article 4 of the Non- proliferation Treaty.

He said the agreement between Iran and Russia on completing the semi-finished Bushehr atomic power plant was for peaceful exploitation of nuclear energy, and that propaganda horns of the West were trying to create a tense psychological atmosphere against Iran.

Va'ezi said the geographical proximity between Iran and Russia along with the abundant potentials for cooperation and the views shared by the two states on regional and international issues, requires further strengthening of Tehran-Moscow cooperation.

He said cooperation between the two countries was satisfactory especially in peace efforts to help restore security in Tajikistan and put an end to fighting in Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Va'ezi said the military atmosphere in Tajikistan has given way to a political atmosphere in light of Tehran-Moscow peace efforts in the republic and that the belligerent parties there were moving forward towards peace, something that should be regarded as a significant breakthrough.

Iranian official said that the peace talks in Tajikistan are passing through a delicate situation in the wake of the postponment of the parliamentary elections.

However, he added, further efforts should be made to bring peace to the critical region in the Central Asia.

IRNA Analyzes U.S. Support of Israel

LD2502214895 Tehran IRNA in English 2120 GMT 25 Feb 95

["U.S.-Arab analysis"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 26, IRNA—Washington's insistence on supporting the Zionist regime's military strength has caused great concern in the Middle East and made Arabs doubtful about Washington's interests in the region.

Even Egypt, one of Zionist regime's major allies in the Middle East and in the Arab League, has expressed its great concern about the Zionist regime possession of nuclear weapons. Cairo has said that it will sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) only when Israel does the same.

Despite widescale protests against nuclear strength of the Zionist regime, Washington and certain Western countries insist on their support for the regime.

Political observers maintain that such an extensive support for Tel Aviv will increasingly convince Arabs that the U.S. is for Israel's supremacy over the Arab countries.

The U.S. and its allies support of the aggressive Baghdad regime, whose activities during the last two decades have brought nothing but destruction of resources and insecurity for the Persian Gulf region, determines the U.S. policy, in this regard, which has faced dissatisfaction of regional countries like Kuwait.

The next steps taken by Washington and other Western countries in the region have made littoral shaykhdoms of the Persian Gulf to realize that the support for existence of Baghdad regime aims at making a regime threatening to its neighbours.

An Arab diplomat said on the one hand Washington and Western countries were blowing up the danger of Baghdad regime and on the other hand they are brushing aside the demand for ousting the regime.

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He added that it was only in the light of such a double-standard policy which Washington managed to conclude security agreements and gain access to military bases in a bid to strengthen its footholds in the strategic region of the Persian Gulf and to benefit from selling its weapons to the regional countries.

According to the diplomat, U.S. illegitimate use of Persian Gulf crisis, and its permanent presence in the region have faced with hatred of regional nations and has increased the likelihood of people's confrontation with their goverments. [sentence as received]

He said that sporadic dissatisfaction and direct confrontations between people and security forces recenly occured in the shaykhdoms point up to this fact.

Political observers maintain that the Westerner's race for their economic cooperation with Iraq indicates that what is important for Washington and certain Western countries is their interest and that they will do everything to preserve their interests.

Zionist regime in compliance with the provisions with Oslo accord and making Yasir 'Arafat pit Palestinians against Palestinians induced fear in those Arab countries which are in quest of establishing ties with the Zionist regime.

What will guarantee commitment of Israel to its obligations toward these countries is the question which is annoying the Arabs who have engaged in negotiations with Israel, the observers say.

The Darul-Beida meeting, held recently with the aim to open the Arab countries' gates to Israel failed to reach its goals.

Developments have caused deep concern and frustrated littoral Arab states of the Persian Gulf particulary those in its southern parts about real objectives of the U.S., Western countries and the Zionist regime and about future U.S. support for their own governments.

Furthermore stability and consolidation of the Islamic system in Iran despite the enemies's plots has opened new prospects and new realities for its Arab neighbours.

An expert in international relations says that one cannot keep away Islamic Iran as the most important country in the region from the region's political arena and to establish a lasting and stable security system without participation of Iran.

*Vafa'i Named Commander of 84th Infantry Division

95P50066A Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 31 Jan 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] The support of the great leader of the revolution for the army is a divine grace and is a source of encouragement for the personnel of this force. Brigadier General Dadbin, the commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ground Forces, stated this on Monday [30 January], during a ceremony to introduce the new commander of Khorramabad's 84th infantry division.

According to Khorramabad's central news unit, the governor general of Lorestan, the political security aid of the governor general's offices, commanders, and the heads of the political ideology offices of the region's armed units were present at this ceremony.

Brigadier General Dadbin said the foundation of the work of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to execute the orders of the leader of the revolution and the commander in chief. He stated: By preparing the necessary facilities and equipment, and with a fundamental and spiritual discipline, the army must be a powerful force, ready to defend the values of the revolution and to execute the precise commands of the commander in chief.

At the conclusion of this ceremony, while expressing appreciation for the work of the previous commander of Khorramabad's 84th Infantry Division, Brigadier General Dadbin introduced Brigadier General Jamshid Vafa'i as the new commander of this division.

President Inaugurates Production Lines at Arms Factory

LD2502152795 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani inaugurated production lines for three types of military armament in Tehran today. The factory will mass produce (Dushka) antiaircraft guns, single-barrel shotguns, and Colt sidearms, meeting the country's need for such weapons.

According to a report by a Central News Unit correspondent, for the first time the production lines of these weapons have been designed by the experts of the weapons factories of the Defense Industries Organization and brought to the stage of mass production.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also inspected samples of weapons produced as well as various units of the Defense Industries Organization today.

The production of G3 rifles, MG3 machine guns, (Tondar) multibarrel guns, and RPG-7 launchers is still on the agenda of the arms manufacturing factory of the Defense Industries Organization, which is one of the oldest arms manufacturing units in the state.

At the moment part of the production capacity of the Defense Industries Organization is devoted to the manufacture of nonmilitary products, including car parts, agricultural equipment, and machine tools, due to the lack of need for arms manufacture.

For the first time the president today presented Brigadier Reza Rahimi-Tari, of the Islamic Revolution Guard

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Corps [IRGC], with a second-grade medal of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his services, and IRGC Brigadier Manuchehr Manteqi and two other officials of the Defense Industries Organization with third-grade medals of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their research work.

Later, in a speech to the officials and workers of the arms production factories and Defense Industries Organization, the president thanked them for their worthy and honorable efforts and the crucial role of their services during the period of the holy defense [Iran-Iraq war].

The president said that one of his lasting memories of experts working in the Defense Industries Organization was the joining in 1978 by the pious and responsible among them of the brave Muslim nation and the Islamic revolution; he said that this honor was completed by the industries' brilliant record during the sacred defense.

Referring to the Defense Industries Organization's capacity for high productivity, the use of domestic technology, and the presence of a talented and valuable workforce in the country, the president said that the country's strength and ability in producing defense equipment is a source of added value and great currency savings, as well as self-confidence, security assurances, and economic and political support. He said that a country whose ideals have many enemies is in need of such industries to defend itself.

He added that the present strength of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a preventive measure against those who harbor ill intentions against the revolution. Today we are not only providing for our needs for defense equipment but have a capacity for exports, he stated.

Referring to the presentation of medals, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the fact that the first state medals were presented during Ramadan and in the country's oldest weapons factory, which enjoys a brilliant revolutionary record, is a point of great honor and an important historic act.

*President on Success of Communication Expansion

95LA0098E Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 28 Dec 94 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday afternoon Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the republic, met with managers, planners, and executives involved in developing Tehran's communications network. He told them that the rapid development of the nation's communications sector and equipping it with the day's most advanced communications and telephone systems is one of the government's successes in the First Five-Year Plan, and he praised the valuable services of specialists in this sector.

The president of the Republic's Public Relations Office reports that the president of the republic emphasized: Cutting or reducing the nation's dependence on foreign countries in the communications industry and implementing huge projects such as the project to increase the Tehran telephone system to 2 million numbers, are among the valuable services and extraordinary, important achievements of which all of society is proud.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Even if we do not give our appreciative and believing people more information on the greatness of the tasks that have been carried in the communications sector during this period, they will understand what great changes have taken place in this sector. He added: A new telephone line is now added in Tehran every minute, and next year two lines will be added per minute. This certainly bespeaks the importance of the effort and planning by the nation's officials, especially in the communications sector.

The president of the republic said that the high ability created in the nation's communications industry is the result of sincere involvement by specialist and experienced manpower, the use of reliable software, and the ability to make real and logical use of public investment in the industry's development. He said: With the design and implementation of an advanced system that has the ability to create more than 4 million telephone lines and the capacity for 20 billion minutes per day of conversation in Tehran, one can appreciate the value of the nation's manpower and scientific and specialist capacity, especially the specialists in the communications software network and the great wealth that has been given to the people.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani discussed the 3,000 billion rials in government investment to expand Tehran's communications network to 2 million telephone lines, and its other positive additional benefits, such as the creation of employment, the transfer of technology, specialist ability and training, great savings in time and cost, and expediting communications. He said: In the period before the Islamic revolution the Tehran Urban Telephone Development Project was expected to cost $600 million, of which $200 million was to be used to employ foreign specialists and technical knowledge. But thanks to the sincerity, commitment, and great talent of domestic manpower, this project has now been carried out capably and proudly without foreign assistance.

The president of the republic emphasized the necessity for involvement by specialists from the nation's communications industry in international markets, and marketing their technological and specialist abilities to the world.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani emphasized to the nation's officials that they must make the public aware of their valuable services in various sectors, with the cooperation of the media, the nation's propaganda centers, and greater activity by various public relations offices.

Based on this report, during this visit the president of the republic visited the huge model of the Project to Increase

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the Number of Tehran's Telephone Numbers, and the officials, and executives running the project gave the president of the republic sufficient information about its implementation.

According to the report from Mr. Gharazi, minister of post, telegraph and telephone, with comprehensive and real planning, and with the implementation of this project in three phases, 1.69 million digital switches have been added to Tehran's communications network, and the number of existing centers increased from 22 centers to 75.

He said: The newest communications technology was used implementing this project, and more than 1,600 km of optical cable was used.

Mr. Gharazi added: With the implementation of this project the number of international communications channels also increased, from 270 channels to more than 3,000 channels, and communications were established with 200 countries.

*Refineries To Use Advanced Computer Systems

95LA0102E Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 16 Jan 95 p 13

[FBIS Translated Text] IRNA—With the use of highly intelligent advanced computer control systems to replace old systems, the quality of products produced at refineries will be completely improved.

The Public Relations Office of the National Iranian Refinery and Oil Products Distribution Company reports that this company's director of refinery affairs made the above announcement. He said: In this regard, the Second Five-Year Social and Economic Development Plan Bill proposed to the Majles also provides for replacing the current refinery control systems, called the pneumatic system, with the advanced DCS [distributed control systems].

Engineer 'Abbas 'Abedpur said concerning this project: In this system, because of the very precise qualitative and quantitative controls, there are unique benefits such as the high quality of the products produced, the creation of continuity and continuation in product control, the reduction of refinery losses, the improvement of the production cycle and oil products, and attention is also given to important environmental concerns.

The chief of refinery development affairs also said concerning this: As long as the old systems exist in the refineries, there will be a $10 million per year loss in production quality, while fuel losses at the refinery are also estimated at between 5 and 11 percent. Yet if the CDS control systems are used, these fluctuating losses will be limited to 2 percent.

*Construction of 1,400 Km of New Roads Planned

95LA0102F Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 15 Jan 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Shahr-e Kord, IRNA—The deputy minister of roads and transportation for technical and road building affairs said: By the end of this year [20 March 1995] 1,400 km of newly built roads will go into operation in the nation's road network.

On Saturday [14 January] in Shahr-e Kord, Engineer Karim Halva'i announced that so far about 70 percent of the work has been done on these roads.

According to him, since the beginning of the current year [21 March 1994] 270 billion rials [R] in credits has been allocated to national projects for road construction in the country.

While visiting the unfinished connective roads between Esfahan and Chah-e Mahal va Bakhtiari to Khuzestan, he said: Another R9 billion will be required to complete this road.

According to one of the experts at the Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Office of Roads and Transportation, so far 92 percent of the connective roads between the nation's central regions and Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari have been physically completed.

Pakistan

Violence Erupts at 2 Karachi Mosques; 20 Killed

'State Of Emergency' Declared

BK2602155195 Delhi All India Radio Network in Hindi 1515 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A state of emergency has been declared in the Pakistani city of Karachi. Since the killing of 20 Shi'ite Muslims at two mosques yesterday the situation in the city has become extremely grave. The Sindh Provincial Government has declared a red alert and security measures have been further tightened in the city. Despite all these measures, eight more people were killed in rioting between the Sunni and Shi'ite communities today. Opposition leader Mohammad Nawaz Sharif and Muhajir Qaumi Movement chief Altaf Hussain have demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Both these leaders have said that the Benazir Bhutto government has failed to deal with the situation. Tension and violence continue to rise in Karachi. The offices of two newspapers were ransacked and set on fire today. Masked Shi'ite youth armed with Kalashnikov rifles are roaming the city streets. Agitated mobs took to the streets today and set fire to many vehicles. Fierce clashes occurred in many places between the mobs and police and paramilitary forces. Karachi wore a deserted look due to the closure of all schools, markets, and government offices.

Meanwhile, the two Christians acquitted by the Lahore High Court in the blasphemy case have been released from jail and taken to an unknown destination.

'Partial Strike' Observed

BK2602162295 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Partial strike was observed in Karachi and Hyderabad today on the appeal of some

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political and religious parties against yesterday's killings. Some shopping centers and small shops were closed and road traffic was thin. Patrolling by law enforcing agencies continued to avert any untoward incident.

Recovery of Dead Bodies

BK2702032795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A press note issued in Karachi says the dead bodies of two persons have been found at two different places, one of them having sustained bullet injuries at another locale. Sporadic shooting incidents have been reported in different parts of the city, while two vehicles had been set on fire in two localities.

Situation Remains 'Extremely Tense'

BK2702092595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The situation in Karachi remains extremely tense with reports of sporadic shootings. According to official sources in the port city, bodies of two persons were found at two different places and a person sustained bullet injuries at another spot. As reported, a state of emergency was declared in the city yesterday and police and paramilitary forces patrolled the streets in a bid to prevent any further mass killings.

Meanwhile, the minority Shi'ite Muslims have accused the Pakistan Government of trying to divide the Muslims. Commenting on the massacres at two Shi'ite mosques on Saturday [25 February] in Karachi that left 20 dead, the secretary general of the Tehrik-i-Jafria, a Shi'ite faction, said that the government has failed to provide security.

Observers say many Pakistanis have been disappointed with Ms. Bhutto's government as it has not been able to solve problems such as a week economy, endemic corruption, and worsening violence. This has encouraged fundamentalist leaders to become more vocal. Ms. Bhutto's relatively week coalition government has often tried to avoid confronting the fundamentalist groups, which has also encouraged them to become more aggressive. In Karachi alone, there have been at least 10 mass shootings at mosques during the last two months, which have been attributed to the increasingly bitter rivalry between militant Sunnite and Shi'ite factions.

Country Supports Ban on Fissile Material

BK2602110795 Karachi DAWN in English 26 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb 25:—Pakistan has for the "first time" publicly stated its position on a fissile material cut-off by agreeing to support the adoption of mandate for the ad hoc working group on a worldwide ban on the production of fissile material—plutonium and highly-enriched uranium—for nuclear explosives, Foreign Minister Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali said on Saturday.

At specially-convened plenary session, held to hear the foreign minister, the 38-member state body of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva welcomed Mr Ali's address which, for the first time, made Pakistan's position on a fissile material cut-off pubic "It was a great honour that the Conference on Disarmament had convened this session to enable me to make my statement," Mr Ali told DAWN.

Pakistan, which in the past had been criticised by the members of the nuclear club, especially the United States, for its "belligerence in blocking" a worldwide ban on the production of fissile material, won a hearty applause from the Conference members for supporting the ban.

"After a lengthy discussion, Pakistan has decided to support the adoption of a mandate for the ad hoc working group based on the language of the 1993 UN General Assembly resolution. We are able to support the language because Pakistan had voted in favour of the resolution," the foreign minister told the plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament last week.

However, Mr Ali said: "We will seek confirmation from this Conference that this language does not preclude any delegation (Pakistan) from raising the issue of the scope of the Convention during the actual negotiations. In this context, we reserve the right to ensure consideration of the question of symmetrical stockpiles."

He told DAWN, clearly stating Pakistan's declared policy on nuclear non-proliferation, that "to freeze the existing levels and the future production of fissionable materials was unrealistic since India's existing stockpiles posed a security threat to the region. "In other words, the reason why Pakistan had so far resisted the ban was that the Conference must first address itself to the "existing grave symmetries, and agree to Pakistan's right to raise the issue during the actual negotiations."

Mr Ali said: "I told the Conference, which is convened under the aegis of the United Nations, that if India continues to indulge in a missile race, it will get a matching response."

According to him, "Pakistan's diplomacy has come of age" as evidenced in Geneva. While categorically sticking to its principled position, Islamabad, at the same time, received congratulations from all the Conference members, including the American Ambassador Stephen Ledogar's gratitude for paving the way for nuclear non-proliferation, said the foreign minister.

Sri Lanka

Government Offers To Open Land Routes to Jaffna

BK2502140095 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government says it has offered to open two land routes through Jaffna peninsula

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to civilians and vehicles. A statement by the President's House said that the forward defense line of the military camp at Pooneryn will be moved 500 meters for this purpose. The government which has partially lifted the embargo made the offer to open the Pooneryn and Elephant Pass routes in a letter to Tamil Selvan, head of the LTTE's [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] political section. It said that the move was one of the series of steps taken by the government to ease the hardships suffered by the people of the North. It remains for the LTTE to do what is required in their part to facilitate free passage through these routes.

The deputy minister of defense, Anuruddha Ratwatte, said in parliament yesterday that a political solution to the ethnic crisis was in sight, and that parliament and the people will be informed of every steps in the discussions with the LTTE. Mr. Ratwatte is also minister of irrigation, power, and highways was speaking on the vote on the Ministry of Defense during the committee's [word indistinct] to the budget debate. Minister Ratwatte said that the peace talks with the LTTE has had an 80 percent success rate. There are few matters that have to be sorted out and once that is done we should have total peace, he added. Minister Ratwatte earlier said that he is happy that the JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna] representative spoke about the security situation in the country. They fought against the political structure a few years ago and it is commendable that they have entered the political mainstream.

Indian Trade Delegation Arrives for Talks

Subcommission Discusses Trade

BK2602134295 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A wide range of subjects including prospects for a further expansion of trade between India and Sri Lanka, joint ventures, and Indian cooperation in developing some sectors in the island were discussed at the third session of the India-Sri Lanka Subcommission on Trade, Finance, and Investment held in Colombo last week. The Indian team was led by the commerce secretary, Tejinder Khanna, while the Sri Lankan delegation was headed by the finance secretary, A.S. Jayawardena.

Sri Lanka requested more market access in India to Sri Lankan goods and the Indian side projected a positive attitude, informed sources said. The Indian delegation, however, pointed out the need to make operative the South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement, SAPTA. The two sides discussed possibilities for expanding investment based cooperation by setting up joint ventures in Sri Lanka. Some of the proposed joint ventures could produce goods which could be exported to India. Among the products suggested were rubber goods, ceramic ware, and automobile accessories such as tires and tubes. The Sri Lankan side requested Indian cooperation to upgrade the island's railway system and the dairy industry. Sri Lanka has also sought Indian help in the tea sector by way of expertise to improve productivity, genetic promotion, and to convert some of the tea factories to produce TDC [expansion unknown] tea.

Drug Smuggling Measures Adopted

BK2502075695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Sri Lanka have agreed to step up measures to prevent drug smuggling. At the Indo-Sri Lankan bilateral talks at Colombo, New Delhi has also agreed to return over 170 boats of the Sri Lankan refugees soon. The leader of the Indian delegation, the director general of Revenue Intelligence, Mr. B.K. Agrawal, told newsmen in Colombo today that an agreement on return of boats and prevention of drug trafficking was reached at the conclusion of the two-day meeting. He said that mandrax has been smuggled out to other countries from India through Sri Lanka.

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